# LEISURE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE:

# PERCEPTION, PARTICIPATION AND POLICY

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## Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis, which is submitted in requirement of the regulations for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is based on my own work and has been composed entirely by myself.

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## Abstract

This research project is concerned with recreational behaviour in the countryside and with the cognitive processes which influence behaviour. The first section is a critical discussion of the development of recreation policy; particular emphasis is placed on the assumptions upon which policy has been based and on the attitudes which appear to have influenced decision making. The main part of the study consists of an empirical survey of cognition and behaviour.

An inductive, multi-operational methodology was used to obtain and analyse data for a wide range of variables relating to cognition and behaviour, drawn from a small sample of individuals from differing households in the city of Edinburgh. Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, checklist questions, sorting of photographs and an attitude scale. Analysis using both qualitative approaches and multivariate techniques established the nature and range of basic concepts and allowed the identification of groups of individuals with similar patterns of response.

The results indicate that lifecycle position is the most important influence on both cognition and behaviour, whereas occupational class is strongly related to cognition alone. A relationship was also found between attitudes and behaviour. There was a remarkable degree of homogeneity within the sample with respect to the perceived reasons for which the countryside was most enjoyed, but significant differences existed within the sample with regard to attitudes to recreational use of the countryside. The use of a

continuum to represent perception of the countryside was not supported by these results; this notion appears to be relevant only for some individuals. These findings have allowed a more accurate assessment of individual requirements in terms of recreational provision, and they indicate a need for a wide range of different types of provision.

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"In this country...the significance of recreational provision has not been appreciated...society ought to regard sport and leisure not as a slightly eccentric form of indulgence, but as one of the community's everyday needs."

(House of Lords Select Committee on Sport and Leisure, 1973)

# Introduction

The purpose of this introduction is to outline the structure of the dissertation and to explain the rationale behind the thesis which is presented in the following chapters. This is an exploratory study and as such does not have a key hypothesis which can be presented at the outset to delineate the proposed subject of study. It is rather an inductive study of an aspect of human behaviour and of the cognitive processes which influence that behaviour. In broad terms, the thesis is concerned with the perception of recreational environments in the countryside and with behaviour in those environments.

The project can be divided into two parts: the first is a critical review of the development of countryside recreation policy; and the second is an empirical study of cognition and behaviour in countryside recreation.

The first section takes a historical perspective in looking at the development of policy. Chapter One outlines briefly the nature of participation and the differing directions of policy. In the next three chapters the development of policy is examined in the context of three broad phases: designation, planning and management. The designation phase which is discussed in Chapter Two is taken as the period following the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. The planning phase (Chapter Three) is centred on the Countryside Acts of 1967 and 1968, and the management phase (Chapter Four) describes approximately the last ten years of

policy. The discussion focusses on the assumptions underlying policy: in each period a critical assumption is identified and discussed. These assumptions are discussed as follows: a) that there is a `traditional ideology' of countryside recreation from which there has developed a set of norms dictating appropriate behaviour in the countryside; b) that policy in the 1960s and early 1970s was determined largely by the perception of recreational activity as a problem of significant proportion; and c) that present policies aimed at lifting constraints on recreational participation will contribute markedly towards improving the quality of life of disadvantaged and deprived groups in society. The main conclusion drawn from this section (in Chapter Five) is that policy has largely been based on the perception of certain problems, and has been coloured by assumptions as to the nature of these problems. The final part of this section concludes that the goals enshrined in the policies of today highlight the need for empirical data on the motivations, perceptions and preferences of people with respect to countryside recreation. The specific questions the thesis seeks to answer are concerned with the nature of perception of the countryside, the nature of attitudes to recreational use of the countryside, and the nature of preferences for recreational environments.

The second part of the thesis comprises a small scale but very detailed empirical survey of perception of the countryside as an environment for recreation, and of leisure behaviour in the countryside. The review of existing literature on motivations, perceptions and preferences and discussion of potential

methodologies comprise Chapters Six to Ten. The presentation of results is found in Chapters Eleven to Fourteen and Chapters Fifteen and Sixteen constitute the discussion and conclusion. The main aim of the survey is the establishment of basic concepts involved in the various aspects of cognition and recreational behaviour in the countryside. In each case, emphasis is laid on determining the range of variation within each variable and whether discrete groups of individuals with distinct patterns of cognition or behaviour exist. As stated above, it is thus an inductive approach, designed to explore some basic aspects of perception, attitude and behaviour in countryside recreation. Specifically, the following variables are examined: recreational pursuits, recreational places visited, perceived reasons for visiting the countryside, perception of recreational environments, preference for recreational environments, and attitudes to recreational use of the countryside. A key aspect of the analysis is to identify groups of individuals with similar characteristics and similar patterns of cognition or behaviour. The survey was administered to a structured sample of individuals at the household level. A small number of individuals was also interviewed in depth using unstructured techniques, in order to identify basic concepts and perceptions: qualitative evidence obtained from these unstructured interviews is presented in Chapter Eleven.

Notwithstanding the inductive nature of the research design, the project was aimed at one specific policy question. This concerns the balance between the provision of concentrated, intensive countryside recreation facilities on the one hand, and low key

provision, intended to disperse users, on the other. There is a lively and continuing debate on this topic: for instance, 'honeypot' strategies, intended to concentrate visitors at selected locations, have been a major part of countryside recreation policy, while alternative policies have been aimed at increasing dispersed access to open countryside, or for providing intensive facilities such as leisure parks. Moreover, the nature of public reaction to such policies is not clear, since the level of use of facilities is not an accurate indication of whether existing needs are being met or new ones are being created. The attitudes which influence public reaction are largely unstudied in Great Britain, yet knowledge of the reactions and attitudes of the public is necessary if the provision of countryside recreation opportunities is to be managed in the best interests of all concerned.

This aspect of policy does not easily lend itself to verification through the testing of hypotheses, since it is largely based on a combination of pressure group interests and value judgments, and not on any clearly stated premises. An inductive approach may, however, clarify aspects of cognition and behaviour which may in turn cast new light upon the working of the policy in question. The results are drawn together in the final chapter to illuminate the validity of policy, and, where appropriate, implications for the future of countryside recreation strategy are also discussed.

In brief, the preceeding paragraphs outline the aims and the structure of the thesis. It may be mentioned at this point that the aims of the project were originally somewhat different and that

the focus of the research shifted considerably during the early stages of the project. This change involved the decision, after a certain amount of development of the theme of perception of only designated recreation and conservation areas, to extend the focus to all recreation environments, thus moving from the particular to the general. The rationale behind this decision was that information on general aspects of perception of all types of recreation environments was of greater immediate value than specific information on the perception of a limited number and type of recreation areas. Such specific information should perhaps follow on when the more basic aspects of perception and attitude have been dealt with. An argument may, of course, be made for the pursuit of specific, highly-focused studies, on the grounds that exclusion of extraneous factors and other complexities simplifies each problem and makes it more easily manageable. This particular consideration has undoubtedly been a problem in the present case; but the choice of research topic cannot be fully rationalised, unlike the design and treatment of the subject once the choice has been made.

Finally, the research is intended as a statement of the position up to 1984. This is due to the length of time taken by the project (work started in 1978) at a time of considerable change in policy. A number of more recent references have been cited, but there has been no attempt at a comprehensive review of publications since 1984.

# 1: Recreation Policy and Participation

The use of the countryside for leisure and recreation in Great Britain has attracted a considerable amount of attention from researchers, planners and policy makers in recent years, and this interest has grown commensurately with the increase of leisure activities in the countryside during the last two decades (Elson, 1979a). Visiting the countryside is now a very popular activity: the National Survey of Countryside Recreation (Fitton, 1978; 1979; Countryside Commission 1982) has estimated that on an average summer Sunday in England and Wales, more than 10 million people visit the countryside, and during a typical summer month close to 100 million visits are made by individuals to the countryside. Similar surveys of participation in Scotland (Scottish Leisure Survey, 1981) show that almost six million visits are made to the countryside during a summer month. Participation on this scale is a phenomenon of considerable importance: yet it can be argued, as Fitton (1979) has done, that the problems caused by recreation in the countryside have more often been assumed than actually tested, and that policy has been developed largely without comprehensive information about the nature, extent and impact of countryside recreation.

Fitton has discussed this point at some length and his implication that countryside conservation policy appears to rest "only on emotional grounds" (1979, p.60) could easily be extended to certain aspects of countryside recreation policy. This thesis is based on the contention that, in Great Britain, planning and

provision for countryside recreation have rested to a certain extent on assumptions rather than on empirical evidence, and that empirical evidence has more often been used to justify these assumptions rather than question them. The aim of the first part of this dissertation is to assess the nature and extent of some of the more far-reaching of these assumptions. The first part of this chapter consists of a brief account of the main features of recreational participation at the present time.

**Participation in recreation**

"Countryside recreation" is a very broad descriptive term, which encompasses a wide range of activities and interests, and defies concise definition. It involves activities as diverse as picnicking, pleasure driving and sightseeing, on the one hand, and canoeing, fishing or hang gliding on the other. However, the latter activities constitute a very small minority of all visits to the countryside, as do all sports and organised activities; over 80 percent of visits to the countryside are made up of informal, casual activities such as walking, driving, picnicking and visiting places of interest (Fitton, 1978). Nevertheless, a wide variety of places is visited in the course of such casual recreation. These range from those managed or provided specifically for leisure use, such as wild life parks, country parks or picnic sites, through those that are the objects of visits, usually by large numbers of people, such as historic houses or the sites of events such as markets, agricultural shows and traction engine rallies, to locations not managed for leisure purposes such as woodlands, lakes and moorlands. The range of activities undertaken in the course of

such informal recreation is also wide: photography, picking fruit and flowers, walking, exploring, children's (and adult's) games, relaxing, visiting places of interest, visiting pubs and restaurants, and swimming are only some of the many activities pursued as part of what is sometimes misleadingly termed 'passive' recreation.

Visits to the countryside are made predominantly by car, and those travelling by bus, train and cycle and on foot comprise only a small proportion of all visitors (Duffield, 1982). The family group is the most common type of party although other groups account for a significant proportion of visitors to the countryside (Elson, 1977a), and very few individuals visit the country on their own. The young and middle-aged are most often involved in visiting the countryside (Fitton, 1978), but other age groups also show a fairly high rate of participation; and, although the upper income/occupational status groups have the highest participation rates, evidence for other income/occupational status groups still shows a considerable involvement in making trips to the countryside (Fitton, 1978).

This evidence indicates that certain generalisations may be made about the characteristics of visitors and the nature and extent of participation in countryside recreation. Recreational use of the country can also be seen from the point of view of its diversity as an activity, and much may be learned from a closer examination of this diversity. It can be argued (Glyptis, 1983), that this diversity has been ignored in much of the literature and that

recreation in the countryside has been assumed to be a certain kind of activity (passive informal recreation) undertaken by a certain kind of participant (member of a middle- to upper- income, car-owning family group). The present study is therefore based on the assumption that recreation in the countryside should be seen from the point of view of the individual participant or group of participants, as a disaggregated form of behaviour, rather than as an aggregate group activity.

**Countryside recreation policy**

Sidaway (1982a) has distinguished three phases in the development of policy for countryside recreation. These phases are a) designation; b) planning; and c) management. This classification is rather imprecise, since the time periods occupied by each phase overlap somewhat, and examples of any one phase may be found during a later phase. Nevertheless the classification is useful because it identifies the most important factors at work in each period. These periods are taken to be as follows: 1949 to 1968 (designation); early 1960s to mid 1970s (planning); mid 1970s to the present (management).

During the designation phase policy was aimed at facilitating access to countryside, particularly to remote countryside. The mechanism was the National Parks Act of 1949, enabling the designation of National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and long distance footpaths. The National Park authorities were granted the power to make access agreements allowing people to walk over open countryside; by 1975 91,125 acres of land in England and Wales were subject to such agreements under part 5 of the Act

(Hill, 1980).

The Countryside Acts of 1967 and 1968 enabled the designation of country parks, and therefore these events also belong to the designation era. However, by the middle of the 1960s a new perspective was developing. There was at this time a common perception among policy makers that problems could be solved through the planning process by means of a rational allocation of land uses and activities. Recreation was no exception to this new orthodoxy, and policy was aimed at planning at the regional level for the perceived need of countryside visitors and other land users (Sidaway, 1982a). Country parks and picnic sites were created, based on the 'honeypot' concept, to concentrate visitors to the countryside in manageable surroundings away from environmentally sensitive areas. By 1972 there were 62 country parks and 77 picnic sites in England and Wales (Countryside Commission, 1972); the number had increased by 1977 to 118 country parks and 169 picnic sites (Countryside Commision, 1978).

The third phase has developed from the legacy of the first two, and is grounded in a climate of changing participation rates and limited resources. It involves the management of existing facilities as effectively as possible to cater for existing demand (Sidaway, 1982). Policy in the third phase also further aims to cater for unmet demand; a direction which has only developed during the 1980s. This latter aim involves providing further public access to countryside, and also enabling those who do not visit the country through lack of opportunity or constraint to participate

more frequently (Countryside Commission, 1984).

To summarise, the main aims of policy linked with these three phases have been: a) emphasis on facilitation of access to open country in generally remote upland areas; b) provision of new facilities located close to urban areas to attract visitors; and c) the management of existing facilities to cater for conflicting land uses and activities and attempts to enable those who do not visit the countryside frequently to do so more often.

The first part of this thesis is concerned with the assumptions underlying these policies. It will be argued that policies have been influenced by contemporary preconceptions and presuppositions, and that empirical evidence has been used to justify such policies rather than question them.

## 2: The Designation Era

This chapter examines the assumptions and attitudes underlying the first stage of recreational policy. The main policy aim of the designation era was the facilitation of access to open country by means of access agreements and creation of long distance footpaths. Dower (1978) has observed in his discussion of the development of the national park idea that the amenity preservation and recreational access movements came together to lobby for legislation to protect and enhance their interests. There had been a long history of attempts to legislate for public access to open country (Dower, 1978; Hill, 1980) dating back to the nineteenth century. The lobby for the protection or preservation of landscape and amenity originated in the creation of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England in 1926. Cherry (1975) has argued that in the development of the national park policy

> "the role of pressure groups is underlined repeatedly; in a real sense government policy emerged as a result of outside influence. Not until the actual framing of the legislation did government come to a closely defined idea as to what it wanted."
>
> (p. 4)

Within the framework of national park designation, planning control was intended to protect and enhance amenity and landscape beauty, while the access agreement mechanism was to satisfy the ramblers' demands for "freedom to roam" (Hill,1980).

There were a number of assumptions underlying recreational policy as expressed in the 1949 Act. First, it was assumed that the preservation and access movements could both be catered for

successfully within the framework of designated national parks. Second, it was assumed that access to open country was guaranteed by the provisions of the Act. Third, it was felt that the pattern of expressed recreational demand for which the parks were intended to cater was the only appropriate type of recreation in these areas. Finally, the perceptions which informed the Dower report of 1945 which largely determined the choice of areas and landscape types for the national parks assumed that only certain types of landscape merited the designation of national park.

This dissertation is concerned primarily with those aspects of recreation policy relating to activities and behaviour in the countryside. Consequently it is not proposed to deal with the first two assumptions in any detail. Dower (1978) has documented the divergence of interests between the preservation and access lobbies, and numerous authors (e.g. Cherry, 1975) have drawn attention to the problems caused by reliance on planning control, an essentially negative mechanism, to limit development in designated areas, in the face of demands by the access movement for more positive measures. Hill (1980) has discussed the achievements of the 1949 Act in providing access to open country and has concluded that, in view of what was promised, little has been achieved and much remains to be done. The other two assumptions, concerning the nature of recreation activity itself, and the appropriate landscape types which could be designated as national parks, are inter-related, and moreover have received little detailed attention elsewhere in the literature. Consequently these assumptions will be discussed at length in the following section.

**The traditional ideology of countryside recreation**

It is contended here that there existed at the time of the 1949 Act a general preconception as to the nature of appropriate recreation activity in the countryside. This preconception held that only certain modes of behaviour are appropriate to countryside recreation and that provision should therefore cater primarily for these and, by so doing, seek to exclude or convert those who subscribed to a different point of view. It is suggested that there existed a 'traditional ideology' of countryside recreation, which held that undiluted contact with the natural environment and the appreciation of natural values form the appropriate focus of outdoor recreation, and those not holding such a position should be converted (Clark, Hendee and Campbell, 1971). Although the definition of the 'traditional ideology is taken from the North American literature, it is still felt to be appropriate to the situation in Great Britain because, as will be argued subsequently, the 'traditional ideology' originated and was developed in this country.

The origin of the traditional ideology lies in the historic development of attitudes to nature and the countryside and it will be argued that this assumption has taken the form of conventional wisdom, and may indeed have become the basis of normative standards of behaviour. The term 'ideology' is used here in the sense of a set of values relating to the proper use of the countryside for recreation. The concept is particularly relevant since many of the connotations of a political ideology are appropriate in the present context. An ideology is a system of beliefs which prescribes

normative rules for behaviour and allows an individual to channel his or her perceptions selectively and interpret information in a particular way. Moreover, and the sense of the term is particularly appropriate here, an ideology is

> "a self-oriented set of ideas promoting the advantages of a particular group, justifying and maintaining its own position ...at the expense of others."
>
> (Muir and Paddison, 1981, p. 29)

The development of the traditional ideology and its influence on the early stages of recreational policy will be examined in this chapter. In particular, it will be argued that the traditional ideology influenced the political process and the distribution of resources, especially in order to promote traditional forms of recreation activity.

**Origins of the traditional ideology**

The perception of the country as an ideal environment is hardly a recent phenomenon. It may be dated back to the pastoral poetry of Theocritus and Virgil which eulogised the rural landscape, while the upper classes have used the country as a retreat since Roman times (Marx, 1964, p. 19). Attitudes to nature have been analysed in detail by writers such as Marx (1964), Glacken (1967), Shephard (1967), Williams (1972; 1973) and Tuan (1974) and many others, and the following discussion draws in large part on this body of thought.

Up to the end of the eighteenth century the vast majority of the population in Great Britain lived in close proximity to, if not actually in, the country. The structure of society and economy was

such that town and country, work and leisure, people and nature, were each inextricably interrelated (Williams, 1972; 1973). However, with the changes in philosophical, scientific and artistic thought that came with the Enlightenment, and with the profound changes in social relations, economic processes and spatial organisation brought about by the Industrial Revolution, attitudes to nature which had remained stable for centuries underwent a series of important changes (Williams, 1973).

The inter-relationship between God, Man and nature has been a complex and changing one (Williams, 1972; O'Riordan, 1976). Nature has been a deity in many non-Christian societies, either in a total sense, or in its individual aspects. As O'Riordan (1976) has pointed out, the nature of the relationship in western society in the last two thousand years has been subject to conflicting interpretation and is open to debate. Nevertheless, it is possible to isolate one major idea which is of particular relevance to the present argument.

Until the seventeenth century, there was a profound distinction between the Divine Cosmos (God, the stars and the heavens) and Man and nature on earth (Lewis, 1964). As a result of the scientific discoveries of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries this perspective slowly began to change and, by the time of the late eighteenth century, the philosophy of the Enlightenment was firmly grounded in an intellectual, scientific and artistic interest in nature (Willey, 1950). Specifically, as Williams (1972) has argued, this interest embodied the concept of separation between Man and nature.

Willey (1950) has argued that Locke's proposition that "the works of nature everywhere sufficiently evidence a deity" (p. 27) was very generally accepted as being self evident at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The 'divinization' of nature had thus already occurred by this particular time and Willey has gathered together a considerable amount of literary evidence to demonstrate the importance of this idea of nature throughout the eighteenth century. Nature as the "finished and unimprovable product of divine wisdom" (Willey, 1950, p. 35) was thus the repository of divine order and natural harmony, in comparison to the increasing chaos surrounding the activities of Man.

Nature per se has no meaning: as Williams (1973) has pointed out, nature can only be invested with meaning by people. Thus nature has been used by people to reflect those things considered to be favourable, ideal or pleasant: the meaning of nature is totally anthropocentric. According to Willey (1950), there existed a widespread desire in the eighteenth century to equate the moral and the physical world. Religious emotions were thus transferred from the supernatural to the natural, and moral order was sought and found in nature. Nature was no longer part of Man, it was now part of the Divine.

It has already been noted that nature has been contrasted with the works of Man since the earliest times, but in his exhaustive review of attitudes to the countryside, Williams (1973) has argued that, by the middle of the eighteenth century, this contrast had developed sufficiently to be of a totally different order from that

of preceeding centuries. Based on the idea of separation between Man and nature, the works of Man were considered to be corrupt and inferior, while nature was a manifestation of the Creator's work as at the time of Creation, imbued with divine harmony and reflecting moral order. This set of ideas developed before the full impact of nineteenth century industrialisation and urbanisation became apparent and thus the social and environmental context of the industrial revolution must have significantly reinforced these beliefs about nature. The unhealthy urban environment, the home of an increasing proportion of the population, with its crowded slums, 'dark satanic mills' and industrial pollution, emphasized the existing contrast with nature even more strongly.

It is notable that these perceptions applied to different forms of nature, whether cultivated, pastoral or the untouched wilderness. The emphasis on landscapes bearing little or no evidence of human activity came from the writings of the Romantics, led by Rousseau, who created the fashion for such landscapes at the end of the eighteenth century (Shephard, 1967). However, as Willey (1950) has pointed out, the divinization of nature occurred quite early in the eighteenth century. Landscapes unmodified by Man clearly were perceived as being unchanged since the Creation, but the belief that nature was inherently good was applied equally to cultivated landscape (Williams, 1973). As Davidson and Wibberley (1977) have pointed out, agricultural life has often been, and sometimes still is, considered to be some kind of rural Elysium. Farming has often been perceived as an entirely 'natural' way of life, encouraging a healthier and more wholesome lifestyle:

> "The uncritical belief that human character fashioned by rural, and particularly by agricultural, experience was somehow vital to the development of a healthy nation, was fostered in the rapidly growing industrial climate of nineteenth-century Britain. So much of the literature of the time bewails the passing of rural Arcadia and its replacement with the dark satanic mills and hateful conditions of the industrial city."
>
> (Davidson and Wibberley, 1977, p. 13)

Thus the belief in the inherent goodness and moral order of the natural world became widely accepted during the industrial revolution, and as a contrast with the human condition, was applied to all kinds of landscape, whether cultivated fields, pastoral scenery, or barren moorland and mountain. Social and economic conditions thus further reinforced the 'otherness' of nature, in particular the qualities of sacredness, beauty, harmony and moral order.

Hill (1980) has argued that the artists, writers and, in particular, the poets of the nineteenth century were the primary force in contrasting the urban environment of the time with nature:

> "Little wonder that Keats when he first saw Windermere said that it made him forget the divisions of life - the discord and suffering. The view he saw produced a harmony as it did for other pastoral poets, who, escaping from the strife and struggles of the hideous towns, saw the countryside as their last refuge."
>
> (Hill, 1980, p.14)

Willey (1950, 1957) has contended that Wordsworth was the most significant and influential of the pastoral poets:

> "Wordsworth's importance in the history of the idea of nature is not likely to be underestimated... The divinization of Nature, which began in the modern world at the Renaissance, and proceeded during the eighteenth century...culminates for English literature in Wordsworth."
>
> (1950, p. 253)

Wordsworth's philosophy was based on the pantheism of the eighteenth century; it embodied the notions of moral order, harmony and goodness in nature and it attributed to nature characteristics such as knowledge, wisdom, re-creation, and tranquillity. There are innumerable references to these qualities of nature in Wordsworth's poetry; there is also the frequent contrast between the 'din of towns and cities' and the 'beauteous forms' of the landscape. Wordsworth considered himself a 'worshipper of nature' and his poetry gave prominence to the concept of transcendental experience in nature:

> 'And I have felt/A presence that disturbs me with the joy/Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime/Of something far more deeply interfused....well pleased to recognise/in Nature.... the guide, the guardian of my heart and soul/Of all my moral being'
>
> (Lines written above Tintern Abbey)

Glacken (1966) has argued that the idea of 'communion' resulting in transcendental experience developed as a corollary to the pantheistic viewpoint:

> "Both the religious and secular expressions [of communion] are associated with the belief that in the solitudes of nature are to be found authentic manifestations of the life-giving forces, that knowledge, emotional reinforcement, and inspiration (whether it be exaltation or incentive toward creative activity) come from that special kind of solitude found in the presence of nature. There are hundreds of examples of this in the literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries."
>
> (Glacken, 1966, p. 365)

Thus, nineteenth-century artists and writers, in the search for the spiritual and the aesthetic, began to perceive divine nature as a source of insight and inspiration. For instance, for Ruskin

> "there was a continual perception of Sanctity, in the whole of nature, from the slightest thing to the vastest; an instinctive awe, mingled with delight; an indefinable thrill,

> such as we sometimes imagine to indicate the presence of a disembodied spirit. I could only feel this perfectly when I was alone...I cannot in the least describe this feeling...the joy of nature seemed to me to come from a sort of heart-hunger, satisfied with the presence of a Great and Holy spirit."
>
> (Quoted in Graber, 1976, pp.3-4)

This kind of transcendental experience has been examined by Carlson and Sadler (1982), who, in their discussion of the aesthetics of environment, have suggested that a distinction should be made between two kinds of environmental experience. In one, the scenery or landscape is simply experienced; in the other, it <u>becomes</u> an experience in the sense that we can

> "distinguish a creative and deliberate type of experience from one characterised by passive reception of and response to simple sensation."
>
> (Carlson and Sadler, 1982, p. 158)

This represents the highest expression of environmental appreciation and, as such, is not an everyday experience:

> "Only relatively few people, through temperament or training, are able, like John Muir, to 'interpret the rocks, learn the language of flood, storm and avalanche - and get as near the heart of the world' ...[this] represents the quintessential form of aesthetic quality which is gained from the interaction of man and environment. To achieve this transcendental state is a rare occurrence."
>
> (Carlson and Sadler, 1982, p. 159)

Clearly this is an unusual experience, limited to a minority of individuals. However, this kind of transcendental experience is exactly what the artists and literati of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries sought, and their attitude to nature was strongly influenced by this experience.

In summary then, a specific attitude to nature had developed among a literary elite by the mid-nineteenth century and in particular reached its highest expression in the poetry of Wordsworth. This

attitude involved three main ideas: first, that nature is sacred and represents moral order and divine harmony; second, that it presents a suitable environment for transcendental experience and particularly hierophany (a term used by Eliade (1961) for the manifestation of the sacred); and finally, as a corollary to the latter idea, that complete solitude is necessary for the full impact of these experiences to occur.

**Evolution of ideas**

This view of nature was refined and developed on both sides of the Atlantic during the latter part of the nineteenth century. Most notable in North America are the writings of Emerson, Thoreau, Marsh, and Muir (Shephard, 1967; Nash, 1967); they dealt primarily with untouched nature, a resource which was in plentiful supply in the United States until the end of the nineteenth century. A notable contribution to the American literature is the work of Graber (1976) on the nature of the wilderness movement. She has argued that the ethic on which the movement is based involves assumptions of hierophany, moral order and transcendental experience in nature, and has drawn significant parallels between the wilderness ethic and the nature of religious movements, in particular because of the emotional intensity of the wilderness following. Graber has also drawn attention to the continuing evolution of this image of nature, in particular the incorporation of ideas from ecological science to define a contemporary North American nature ethic.

In Great Britain a history of the evolution and development of

these attitudes to nature is largely lacking. It is, however, beyond the scope of this thesis to attempt such a review. There is not enough space in a work of this scale to evaluate comprehensively the attitudes held by the comparatively disparate conservation and recreation movements since the second half of the nineteenth century. Instead, the aim of the rest of this chapter is to demonstrate the existence of a link between the philosophy of nature held by the nineteenth century writers, and the attitudes held by those involved in policy making in the designation era.

If the most important aspects of the traditional ideology can be seen to have crystallised in the poetry of Wordsworth, as is contended here, then there is evidence that these ideas of nature were disseminated widely during the latter part of the nineteenth century, and could be said to have gained widespread acceptance, at least among the educated portion of society. Willey (1950, 1957) has argued forcefully for the pre-eminence of Wordsworth's ideas and their influence on the thinking of his time and beyond. He has contended (1957) that the Wordsworthian philosophy influenced many of the prominent figures in literary circles throughout the nineteenth century and that this influence diffused even more widely into the twentieth century. The acceptance of these ideas was favoured by two factors: the prevailing social and physical environment of the industrial revolution, noted above; and the official position of religion at the time. Nineteenth century religion was devoid of beauty and was puritanically obsessed with fire and damnation; consequently the Wordsworthian view of natural beauty as the repository of religion and of the 'God of the hills'

received widespread support (Willey, 1957).

Elite attitudes evolve through specific channels and there are clear links through education and social position between the literary circles of the period and, for instance, the membership of the Victorian rambling and mountaineering clubs. Willey (1957) has noted for instance, that Leslie Stephen, a prominent mountaineer of the 1860s who was influenced by Wordsworth's writings and formed a walking club known as the 'Sunday Tramps',

> "really felt that a walk in the country was better than going to church, because in the open air you confronted the living God whereas in church you only met with a fossilised one"
> (p. 24)

It seems clear that, as Willey has argued, the Victorian mountaineers subscribed to these attitudes:

> "in the writings of Stephen and Ruskin about the Alps the note of mystical exultation is ever present. For a man like Stephen the ascent of a mountain was a spiritual as well as a physical exercise, purging and bracing the soul."
> (1957, p. 24)

Willey has concluded that Stephen and his contemporaries echoed Wordsworth in their attitudes to nature, in associating themselves

> 'not with the mean and vulgar works of Man,
> but with high objects and enduring things...
> purifying thus the elements of feeling and of thought'

Evidence of the influence of the values of the 'traditional ideology' during the nineteenth century is also demonstrated by the nature and design of the urban parks which were provided by the municipal authorities of many towns in the second half of the century. The parks were intended primarily as a means of social control, and their form, as Chadwick (1966) has pointed out, reflected the principles of landscape design of the period. The

underlying intention, in accord with the prevailing perception of nature, was that visitors should experience direct contact with nature, and thus derive benefits of health, recreation and moral education (Cunningham, 1980). The parks were not intended simply as settings for other recreational activities such as sports, games and entertainments; such extraneous activities were frowned upon (Tourism and Recreation Research Unit, 1983).

Aldous Huxley, writing at the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century, suggested that by that time these values had been widely accepted:

> "In the neighbourhood of latitude fifty north, and for the last hundred years or thereabouts, it has been an axiom that nature is divine and morally uplifting. For good Wordsworthians -- and most serious minded people are now Wordsworthians, either by direct inspiration or at second hand -- a walk in the country is the equivalent of going to church, a tour through Westmoreland is as good as a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. To commune with the fields and waters, the woodlands and the hills, is to commune, according to our modern and northern ideas, with the visible manifestations of the 'Wisdom and Spirit of the Universe.'"
>
> (1929, p. 113)

Huxley has clearly indicated how these values spread and were accepted by at least certain social groups:

> "Wordsworth became for many intelligent, liberal-minded families the bible...of pantheism...Brought up as children in the Wordsworthian tradition, we were taught to believe that ...the First Lesson was to be read among the clouds, the Second in the primroses; the birds and the running waters sang hymns, and the whole blue landscape preached a sermon 'of moral evil and of good'".
>
> (1923, p. 155)

Willey has contended that these attitudes to nature were still widely held in the middle of the twentieth century:

> "For many another escaped Puritan or overwrought intellectual in the nineteenth century, and for many a sufferer from the strange disease of modern life, looking up from amongst the

> dark Satanic mills of the industrial age, the authority of the Wordsworthian Nature-religion has seemed absolute... Vestiges of the Wordsworthian impulse still survive in the activities of bodies like the National Trust or the Society for the Preservation of Rural England, and amongst the hordes of hikers and cyclists who wander weekly over the countryside."
>
> (1950, p. 291)

It thus seems that the attitudes to nature implicit in the Wordsworthian philosophy had diffused well beyond literary circles and had become fairly widely accepted by the twentieth century. Channels of diffusion such as literature, education and other modes of communication would ensure the availability of these ideas to a considerable proportion of the population, and it is further contended that, over time, the ideas themselves would become separated from their origin and take on the character of conventional wisdom. Such commonly accepted values would then become normative standards for behaviour, generally unacknowledged, but dictating appropriate and acceptable conduct. It is not possible to present evidence, other than that based on the work of Willey quoted above, to support this contention, since this would require extensive research into primary sources. Because the main part of the dissertation is concerned with an empirical survey of perceptions and attitudes, the scale of this project does not permit such a review.

Clearly other attitudes to nature also exist, in particular, those based on use values, property and exploitation. Nevertheless, in relation to poetry, literature, and, increasingly, leisure activities, it may be argued that the attitudes which developed from Wordsworthian pantheism had become widely accepted among at

least certain groups in society during the first half of the twentieth century.

**The National Parks Act**

The attitudes to recreational use of the countryside implicit in reports made by government committees prior to the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act are of particular interest here. It may be argued that the attitudes espoused by John Dower in his 1945 report have been institutionalised in the national parks. Shoard (1980) has argued that Dower's personal philosophy was particularly influential in the setting up of the national parks: he wrote the 1945 report in his capacity as a civil servant but held very strong personal feelings on the subject of national parks and wild country. The eventual choice of national parks was determined by Dower's preference for wild rocky country and extensive moorland; hence the parks are confined almost exclusively to these landscape types.

From an early stage it became clear that only a certain kind of recreational behaviour was expected in the national parks, a kind of behaviour which involved a specific perception of the countryside and a particular attitude to nature. The prevailing attitudes are clear from the Dower report:

> "the two purposes [preservation and access] while supporting and justifying each other in general, may nevertheless be at variance with and limit each other in detail. Some things that the visiting public - or that part of it which is as yet insensitive and ignorant of natural beauty - might wish to do in National Parks, and some of the more urban and mechanical facilities they might ask for, will have to be prohibited and restricted."
>
> (1945, p. 15)

Whereas Dower recognised that, in order to resolve conflicts between development and preservation, development of all kinds would have to be limited, the assumptions he made about the attitudes of other people were still rather extreme. His report clearly implies that the interests and attitudes of many people would be inimical to the concept of national parks, and is indeed somewhat exclusive:

> "...one restriction on the type and volume of visitors is, indeed, desirable, though it should be left -- and with time and wise management, can confidently be expected -- to impose itself; namely that those who come to National Parks should be such as to wish to enjoy and cherish the beauty and quietude of unspoilt country and to take their recreation, active or passive, in ways that do not impair the beauty or quietude, nor spoil the enjoyment of them by others. The genuine demand for country holidays has grown enormously....but it is far from universal. Nor is it likely to become so. It is not just a question of custom or education, or lack of it. Many people of all classes are, by taste and temperament, far better satisfied by town rather than by country as a holiday setting...For those who want to spend their holidays gregariously, and to enjoy the facilities - so well provided by the resorts...National Parks are not the place. They had far better keep away..."
>
> (Dower, 1945, p.23)

It is clear that assumptions were being made about the nature of appropriate behaviour in the national parks and about the extent to which appropriate attitudes to nature and countryside recreation were to be found in the population at large.

The views of the Hobhouse Committee (1947) clearly indicate its concern about appropriate forms of recreational behaviour and provision:

> "We hold the view that it is the primary purpose of National Parks to provide country contentments in settings of unsullied beauty. It would therefore be a mistaken policy to attract into the National Parks those whose tastes are for gregarious holiday making and urban gaiety, by providing the more organised amusements appropriate to the larger holiday resorts. (Hobhouse, 1947, p.46)

This Committee were also concerned that "the peace and beauty" of the countryside should not be disturbed by "incongruous pursuits" (p. 9). 'Country sports' such as fishing, riding, sailing and nature study were to be encouraged; the Committee considered, for example, that camping had

> "the greatest educational value...in bringing campers into close contact with Nature."
>
> (Hobhouse, 1947, p.37)

Similarly, the Committee considered that national park centres which fulfilled a serious educational function would be appropriate. On the other hand, they proposed powers for the park authorities to limit the entry of motor coaches, because of the 'threat' of such vehicles bringing large numbers of people into the parks and thus affecting their peace. This concern with excluding certain visitors, those who come in large groups or numbers, is illustrated by the following proposal:

> "The proper planning of urban seaside resorts and the appropriate siting of large holiday camps will relieve the pressure of gregarious holiday-making from those areas which still retain their natural beauty and solitude."
>
> (Hobhouse, 1947, p.58)

The concern of both John Dower and the Hobhouse Committee with the 'threat' to the national parks from 'gregarious holiday-makers' is especially significant: Dower (1945) considered virtually all kinds of recreational development, apart from youth hostels and camp sites, to be inappropriate. It would appear that both Dower and the Hobhouse committee saw a significant part of the threat to these areas coming from a conflicting recreational interest; a recreational interest which they sought to exclude precisely because it did not subscribe to their values and did not accept

their norms of behaviour. 'Gregarious' holiday making was contrasted with 'solitude' and 'quietude', 'urban and mechanical facilities' and 'organised amusements' were contrasted with 'country contentments in settings of unsullied beauty'. It may be argued that the Hobhouse Committee, in calling for the appropriate planning and siting of coastal development in relation to national parks and conservation areas, was as much concerned with keeping 'inappropriate' visitors away from national parks, as it was with preventing intrusive development which detracted from the landscape or wildlife qualities of the areas. The recommendation for the 'appropriate' siting of large holiday camps implies that 'inappropriate' holidaymakers should be steered away from the parks; this long before the growth in countryside visiting of the following decades created any real pressure on the parks.

In their proposals, both the Committee, and John Dower in his 1945 report, were making considerable and elitist assumptions about the attitudes and interests of a large part of the population, the gregarious holiday makers, 'that part of the visiting public which is insensitive and ignorant of natural beauty' and who should 'far better keep away' from 'those areas which still retain their natural beauty and solitude'.

The Hobhouse Committee clearly believed that "solace and inspiration" may be gained from "wild and remote places" (p. 9). Dower quoted widely from Wordsworth in his report, and he considered that, above all, the national parks should be concerned with the provision of that type of recreation which was

"the completely peaceful seclusion which cannot be enjoyed by more than very few at the same time."

(1945, p.15)

The attitudes to nature and recreational use of the countryside implicit in the Dower and Hobhouse reports are obviously related to the activities, facilities and modes of behaviour held by the authors to be inappropriate in the national parks. The strong opposition to 'gregarious holiday making' and to 'urban and mechanical facilities' clearly reflects the attitude that 'undiluted contact with the natural environment' and 'the solitary appreciation of natural values' (Clark et al., 1971) form the appropriate focus of outdoor recreation, at least in the national parks, and those not holding such a position should be converted or excluded. Thus, although Dower and Hobhouse were specifically concerned with the twin aims of preservation of landscape and amenity and provision of recreational facilities, their proposals were also coloured by particular attitudes to nature and countryside recreation, and they were concerned with protecting and enhancing the opportunities for a specific type of recreation. Considering that the 1949 Act was intended to set up national parks, with public money, for the nation, this was perhaps a somewhat elitist view.

**Conclusion**

The attitudes to nature and recreational use of the countryside which had developed over the preceeding two hundred years clearly appear to have influenced the making of policy in the case of the national parks. It may also be argued that the other assumptions underlying policy developed from the current attitudes to nature.

The assumption that both recreation and conservation would be catered for by the national parks mechanism, and the assumption that access to open country would be guaranteed by the provisions of the Act, may both be traced back to the underlying preconception that only certain types of behaviour were compatible with the particular landscapes concerned. These behavioural norms were assumed to ensure that through the search for solitude conflict over recreational activities would not arise and the natural beauty of the areas would be successfully preserved. Cherry has in fact argued

> "essentially the [1949 National Parks] Act was a sop to political pressure and while the cause of the national parks themselves was protected and even enhanced, it can be argued that the proper development of a comprehensive countryside policy embracing national parks and other country areas was significantly retarded."
>
> (1975, p. 4)

Policies which were based on a variety of assumptions about the nature of the problem and the appropriate solutions were unlikely to create a long term equilibrium in the allocation of land uses and activities. Consequently, in little more than a decade a new phase in recreation policy was emerging to deal with a new set of problems.

## 3: The Planning Era

In this chapter it is argued that policy for recreation in the 1960s and 1970s was largely aimed at influencing the movement and behaviour of visitors in appropriate directions, and was thus largely defensive and exclusive. This policy was grounded in the 1967 and 1968 Countryside Acts, which enabled the creation of country parks and picnic sites, and the provision of grant aid for projects to cater for visitors in the countryside, such as car parking and toilets (Patmore, 1983). The assumptions on which these policies were based related to (a) trends and patterns of population growth, increases in car ownership and countryside visiting; and (b) the consequent perception of countryside visiting as a problem of major proportions.

The 1950s and 1960s were a period of economic growth, with a concomitant increase in personal disposable incomes, car ownership and leisure time (Fitton, 1979; Duffield, 1982). The number of visitors to the countryside increased during this period, and largely due to the impact of the private car, patterns of recreation changed. Rather than engaging in active but solitary pursuits, as visitors to the national parks had been expected to do, these visitors tended to enjoy the countryside in a more informal and unorganised way.

One of the main themes of research on countryside recreation in the 1960s was based on the conceptual supply and demand framework of conventional economics (Elson, 1977b; Coppock and Duffield, 1975)

and had the objective of using social trends to predict future demand from the present characteristics of visitors. This perspective served only to focus attention on the increasing growth in participation. Studies by ecologists of soil erosion and vegetation change, which concentrated on extreme cases and on the sites of greatest pressure (Sidaway and O'Connor, 1978), were interpreted as being evidence of excessive visitor impact throughout the countryside.

Consequently, a conventional wisdom developed during the 1960s which held that recreation in the countryside constituted a serious threat to both the environment and to other land users in the countryside, from which it followed that policy should be defensive and restrictive. Shoard (1980) described this point of view as follows:

> "...policies have been designed to keep them [townspeople] out of the countryside that has escaped the plough and still retains much of its beauty...and to confine them to artificial playgrounds in far less attractive countryside near to towns. Though the conservation of fragile landscapes and wildlife communities has usually been cited as the reason for this policy, the agricultural lobby has had a lot to do with it. Farmers have vigorously supported the 'protection' of the countryside from visitors, as visitors (and the problems or supposed problems they bring) would be kept away from farmland at the same time."
>
> (p. 195)

This assumption has already been examined to some extent by Fitton (1979). It is, however, of considerable relevance to the argument presented here, in particular to the contention that recreation policy in the 1960s and 1970s was centred largely around attempts to influence the movement and distribution of visitors in the countryside. Consequently, this assumption will be discussed here

in some detail.

Fitton (1979) has argued that policies of constraint have predominated in the development of the overall strategy for countryside recreation during the 1960s and 1970s:

> "In the last two decades there has been a tendency to view recreation in the countryside as a problem to be contained rather than a welcome opportunity for people to enjoy themselves."
>
> (1979, p.57)

In that article, Fitton quoted extensively from publications of those two decades to support his contention that the response to the growth in participation in countryside recreation in the post-war years represented at the extreme, a 'moral panic' - a condition which

> "emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests: its nature is presented in stylised and stereotypical fashion."
>
> (Cohen, quoted in Fitton, 1979, p.57)

This perception of participation in countryside recreation as posing a threat to the rural environment is evident from the thinking of those involved in, for example, the Countryside in 1970 Conferences, the first of which was held in 1963. Lord Molson, representing the Council for the Protection of Rural England, claimed that "Access in excess destroyed natural beauty" (The Countryside in 1970, 1964, p.19). Similarly, Michael Dower's 'Fourth Wave' (1965) reflected the fear that the increase in visiting the countryside would have serious consequences:

> "But the greatest need, and the toughest problem, is the invasion of those who pour out of the cities by car, coach and train and converge on riverside, commonland and forest for a change of scenery. Few of them are familiar with the countryside, with one inch maps or the laws of trespass: they want to find a place near a main road where they may picnic

> or pull up the car. In small numbers they present few problems. But our countryside was not designed for thousands and tens of thousands."
>
> (Dower, 1965, p. 131)

The tone of Dower's 'Fourth Wave' conveyed a sense of urgency and a feeling of impending disaster, using words like 'car-choked', 'chaos', 'notorious', 'over-crowded', 'appalling', 'congested', 'sheer numbers' and 'havoc' to describe the effects of the increasing numbers of visitors to the countryside. It was claimed by J. Lousley of the Botanical Society that there was

> "Almost complete destruction of vegetation in places where the public congregate at weekends in the largest numbers. One would have thought it self-evident that some control is necessary unless the places they wish to visit in large numbers are to be destroyed."
>
> (The Countryside in 1970, 1964, p.42)

This view was echoed by agricultural and land-owning interests. G. Howard of the Country Landowners Association stated at the same conference

> "But be in no doubt that this increased access causes loss to the countryman. Landowners' sporting rights are worthless, sheep stray, fires burn, walls are knocked down, the damage may only be caused by a few, but it is out of all proportion to their numbers."
>
> (The Countryside in 1970, 1964, p.47)

Lord Henley of the Country Landowners Association argued, in evidence to a parliamentary committee, that

> "there will be certain parts of the country where in less than a generation one will have to accept it is no longer possible to farm at all because of the public pressure to come and look."
>
> (House of Lords Select Committee, 1973, p.168-9)

The literature of the time indeed abounds with words like 'pressure', 'destroy', 'explode', 'intercept', 'filter', and 'containment' (quoted by Fitton, 1979, p.58). Evidently, land owners and land users in the country perceived the growing numbers

of visitors as a problem, and as a threat to their own interests.

The involvement of pressure groups in the two 'Countryside in 1970' conferences which preceeded the Countryside Acts implies that such groups exerted at least some influence on policy. These pressure groups included, for example, the Botanical Society, the Field Sports Society, the British Mountaineering Council, the Country Landowners Association, the National Farmers Union, the Field Studies Council, the National Trust, the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves, the Central Council for Physical Recreation, the Ramblers Association, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the Councils for the Protection of Rural England and Wales and the Wildfowl Trust, to name but a few. It may be argued that these individuals and groups wished to influence policy precisely because they perceived the increasing numbers of visitors to conflict with their own interests.

Lowe and Goyder (1983) have surveyed environmental pressure groups such as these, and they argue that organisations such as the Ramblers Association, the CPRE and the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves have had a considerable influence on the processes of policy-making and planning. For instance, environmental groups and other countryside interest groups (e.g., CLA, NFU) have given evidence to government committees such as the House of Lords Select Committee on Sport and Leisure (1973) and the Environment Sub-committee of the House of Commons Expenditure Committee on National Parks and the Countryside (1976). Lowe and Goyder (1983) have also documented the extensive contacts that these countryside interest groups have with local authority planning departments and the

manner in which the planning agencies rely on such groups for advice, information and even technical expertise. In his study of the factors which influence decision making in the planning of rural recreation facilities, Curry (1982) emphasizes the influence that local elected representatives have on the decisions that are made. As Shoard (1980) has pointed out, in rural areas local councillors almost exclusively represent the agricultural and land-owning interests.

In the light of these points it is contended that the land-owning and farming lobbies were joined by conservationists, amenity organisations and wildlife groups in opposition to the influx of visitors to the countryside, as the opinions voiced in 'The Countryside in 1970' conferences (1964, 1966) demonstrate. Those pressure groups concerned with recreation were involved in specific interests, for instance, mountaineering clubs, the Central Council for Physical Recreation and the Ramblers Association, none of whom could be said to represent the views of the vast majority of countryside visitors.

**Country parks**

The concept of a country park seems to have first been suggested around 1963 by Keith Joseph, then Minister of Housing and Local Government. Such parks were intended as places for "intensive open-air recreation" planned to draw people away from "areas of quietude" (Cherry, 1975, p.126). It is likely, however, that the same idea must have occurred to others in government and to land owners and conservationists. Dower, for instance, in the 'Fourth

Wave' (1965), proposed concentration rather than dispersion of visitors to the countryside as a response to the increase in recreational activity.

These ideas were institutionalised in the 1967 and 1968 Countryside legislation. The White Paper 'Leisure in the Countryside' (Ministry of Land and Natural Resources, 1966) which preceeded this legislation was based on the assumption of an increase in the population of England and Wales of some 19 million by the end of the century and clearly assumed a similar increase in the number of recreational visits to the countryside. Country parks were intended to ease traffic congestion, reduce "pressure on the more remote and solitary places" and

> "would reduce the risk of damage to the countryside -- aesthetic as well as physical -- which often comes about when people simply settle down for an hour or a day where it suits them, somewhere 'in the country' -- to the inconvenience and indeed expense of the countryman who lives and works there."
> (Ministry of Land and Natural Resources, 1966, p. 6)

This idea developed into the 'honeypot' concept which is essentially a means of providing recreational facilities to attract visitors, thus drawing those same people away from 'fragile' or 'sensitive' areas (Brotherton, 1975; Cloke and Park, 1981). In this way, those who are (supposedly) not looking for 'truly natural countryside' (House of Lords Select Committee, 1973, para. 225) would be provided for:

> "By judicious siting of facilities it is possible to divert demand from vulnerable places and to contain visitor pressure in small areas. This is the thinking behind the Countryside Acts...and the Committee consider this approach to be correct. The effect of harnessing much of this demand will be to leave the dedicated walker, mountaineer or nature lover to explore the country...and to preserve the natural beauty of large tracts of countryside."

(House of Lords Select Committee, 1973, paras. 225-6)

Such statements also illustrate that assumptions were made regarding what people wanted to do in the countryside. These proposals were justified by unsubstantiated opinions that certain types of recreational use were 'unnecessary' and that the demands of visitors were for 'artificial' facilities and not for 'truly natural countryside':

> "It would be a serious mistake to open up areas of natural beauty to indiscriminate access, for the pressure from visitors can eventually destroy what they come to see...The emphasis should be on local facilities, artificial if need be, which can meet the demands of day trippers...where there is a high urban population, the policy should no longer be to divert their recreation towards the countryside but to provide day visit facilities close to the towns."
> (House of Lords Select Committee, 1973, para. 220)

In the course of these attempts to influence the movement and distribution of visitors, the Select Committee was concerned that existing legal machinery, such as grant aid, should not be used to encourage people to visit the open country by the provision of facilities there. The Committee recommended that aid should instead be made available for the setting up of recreation facilities in the urban fringe, rather than in countryside locations.

It may thus be argued that country parks were intended, at least partly, to keep visitors out of the 'deeper' countryside. In evidence to the House of Commons Expenditure Committee on National Parks and the Countryside (1976), the county planning officer for Powys suggested the need for:

> "a number of country parks on the Welsh Border at principal access points (dare I say, analagous to the mediaeval forts) possibly with a second and even a third line of defence

> providing facilities for those who are satisfied with a car park, a cup of tea and a loo and guiding those who wish to penetrate deeper into Wales."
>
> (p.332)

The House of Lords Select Committee on Sport and Leisure expressed similar opinions:

> "the Committee note with approval that Cheshire [County Council], for instance, is trying to ring Liverpool, Manchester and Stoke with country parks so as to produce a filter through which the townspeople must pass".
>
> (para. 227)

In a survey of recreational use of the Loch Lomond area for Dumbarton County Council, Nicholls and Young (1968) clearly saw their remit as involving the recommendation of recreational provision in order to control the threat from increasing use. The unquestioned assumption underlying their research saw recreation provision aimed at

> "the provision of appropriate ancillary facilities, which will achieve a sufficient degree of regulation and control over people."
>
> (Nicholls and Young, 1968, p.28)

The academic research perspectives and the perceptions of the time thus reinforced the view that recreational use of the countryside was a serious problem, and policy was developed in an ad hoc fashion, as a response to this problem.

**National park policies**

As might be expected, evidence of similarly exclusive policies may be found in the policies of the national park authorities. In a review of the national park plans, Dennier (1978) has noted that

> "[the] Sandford [Committee] and the Government have given conservation the edge over recreation, but, as visitors continue to flock to the parks in search of both informal and active recreation, policies to contain these activities,

> protect residents and wildlife from disturbance and the land from simply wearing away naturally loom large in the national park plans."
>
> (p. 178)

The national parks intend a 'holding operation' to 'contain' the casual visitor (Dennier, 1978, p. 181), and the same author has noted that

> "There are signs of attitudes hardening against the visitor in some parks."
>
> (p.181)

Some national park authorities have taken steps to ensure that they do not advertise themselves or actively encourage visitors:

> "The National Park Authority [will]...avoid promoting and discourage others from promoting the National Park or any part of it in a way which, by actively encouraging larger numbers of visitors, will increase conservation problems."
>
> (Brecon Beacons National Park Plan, 1977, p. 31)

and they have also attempted to influence (author's emphasis)

> "the total numbers visiting the National Park...The distribution and behaviour of visitors once they have arrived in the park ...[and] the impression and understanding of conservation issues and national park purposes gained by visitors."
>
> (Brecon Beacons National Park Plan, 1977, p. 31)

This strategy is most strongly expressed in the management objectives for recreation set out in the Plan for Dartmoor national park, which aim

> "To encourage the creation of recreation opportunities outside the national park especially in relation to major visitor sources."
>
> (Dartmoor National Park Authority, 1977, p.21)

Similarly, Coley (1977) describes the 'de-marketing' approach of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority to reduce use. Although the national parks have dual policy objectives of conservation and provision for recreation (and the former takes precedence) the policy mechanisms described here indicate that the manipulation of the movements of visitors and their behaviour forms

an important aspect of policy.

**Undesignated countryside**

Recreational policy in other parts of the countryside has been similarly exclusive or restrictive, as Fitton (1979) has noted. The Structure Plan for East Cleveland (Cleveland County Council, 1977), for instance, considers the situation is fast approaching where "natural assets are likely to be irreparably damaged" (p. 123). The plan recommends

> "There will be a general presumption that the demand for outdoor recreation in the countryside will only be met where it does not damage the natural and agricultural environment, and where it does not result in a deterioration of the quality of recreational activities."
>
> (p. 123)

The same approach can be discerned in the policies laid down in the Staffordshire Structure Plan:

> "recreational uses will be channelled into areas which will cause least disturbance to good agricultural land and rural activities. Any new facilities such as country parks and picnic areas will be carefully supervised to minimise nuisance to adjacent owners."
>
> (Staffordshire County Council, 1979, p. 83)

Invariably such provision is made close to urban areas and is based on the 'honeypot' concept. With respect to the 'deeper' countryside, policies of exclusion prevail: the intention of the Staffordshire Structure Plan is to

> "give special attention to the carrying capacity of landscape areas vulnerable to recreational pressure. It may be necessary in these areas to control, through various forms of management policy, the amount of access to visitors and their vehicles."
>
> (Staffordshire County Council, 1979, p. 83)

Frequent mention has been made of the concept of 'carrying capacity' in such policies. Barkham (1973) has, however, argued

that the concept of carrying capacity cannot be realistically applied to recreation planning because capacity cannot be determined objectively and in any case will vary according to the level and type of management employed. The use of the concept has thus resulted in the development of elitist policies, which are based on the perceptions, and which favour the interests, of only a small number of people.

The problem-oriented approach to recreation provision is seen in other plans and policy documents. The West Berkshire Structure Plan states as a matter of policy that

> "The County Council considers that priority in public spending on informal recreation should be accorded to solving problems of over-use and misuse."
> (Berkshire County Council, 1977, pp.83-84)

Proposals for new facilities in such policies are looked at from the point of view of the possible harm they will cause to landscapes and other users, and the co-operation of landowners is sought to

> "protect areas of high landscape value from unacceptable levels of recreation activity"
> (Berkshire County Council, 1977, p.84)

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that recreational policy in the 1970s was largely aimed at keeping people out of areas of natural beauty and high landscape value, and concentrating them instead in artificial facilities, often of lesser scenic and aesthetic value, close to towns. These policies have been based on surveys of recreational use, but there is, however, a dearth of academic research which defines 'acceptable' levels of use in relation to disturbance of land use and damage to vegetation

(Sidaway and O'Connor, 1978). Moreover, the definition of acceptable levels of use varies according to the techniques of management used. This argument suggests that assumptions rather than empirical evidence must have formed the basis of these policies.

Often such policies have recommended the use of disused industrial and mineral sites as being suitable for the development of intensive recreation sites, as part of the process of re-distributing recreational use. The House of Lords Select Committee (1973) recommended that

> "The Mersey Valley park, surrounded by open country on one side and chimneys on the other...is the kind of facility which should be encouraged."
>
> (para. 177)

Similarly the Staffordshire Structure Plan (Staffordshire County Council, 1979) includes recommendations to develop intensive recreation facilities close to towns on derelict land or on land of little agricultural value.

It cannot be denied that efficient planning for the use of land may dictate that derelict land should be put to use for recreation, or that the scale of countryside visiting may have indeed created some problems. The evidence presented here, however, suggests that policy in the 1960s and 1970s has been developed primarily on the basis of a perception of countryside recreation as a serious threat to both the ecology of the countryside and the livelihood of those who live and work there.

Such views are not, however, only associated with the increasing growth in countryside visiting of the last two decades. Comments

made by one member of the Addison Committee on National Parks in 1931, indicate a similar attitude to visitors to the countryside:

> "In Windsor Great Park and the adjacent Forest many acres of young plantation and heath are burnt every year by mischievous and careless visitors, cartloads of broken glass, paper and other rubbish have to be collected at great expense, the rhododendrons in summer and the hollies in winter are ruthlessly plundered. In agricultural districts I hear complaints of cattle and horses maimed by broken glass, of sheep worried by uncontrolled dogs, of fences broken and gates left open."
>
> (Addison, 1931, p. 44)

Joad (1937) also considered the "untutored townsman's invasion of the country" a "blight on amenity" and an "outrage" (p. 72). Wordsworth, in an earlier age, argued that the working classes should not, through the building of a railway, be encouraged to visit the Lake District (Fitton, 1979). The fact that such opinions appear to have existed throughout at least the last century, and are, as such, largely unrelated to any real impact that recreation may have on the environment, indicates the existence of assumptions which have influenced attitudes towards recreational use of the countryside.

Recent research indicates that the assumptions on which the policies of the 1960s and 1970s were based are not supported by empirical evidence. The assumptions of continuing population growth have not been borne out by reality, and during the late 1970s the rate of countryside visiting began to decline (Sidaway, 1982a). The impact of recreational use on vegetation and wildlife has been shown to be relatively minor (Sidaway and O'Connor, 1978), especially in comparison with the effects on the environment of pollution, pesticides and agricultural improvement. Furthermore,

management techniques are available which can adequately cope with any recreational impacts that occur. Secondly, Shoard (1980) has discussed the impact of recreational activity on agriculture and has suggested that the losses suffered by farmers as a result of such activity are negligible, in particular when the possible benefits of recreation and tourism to the agricultural community are taken into account. Finally, research findings presented by Fitton (1979) have indicated that the average countryside visitor tends to be rather uncertain and inhibited about what he or she can do, and where access is allowed in the countryside, but is nevertheless generally considerate about farming and other land uses.

**Conclusion**

Two main conclusions may be drawn from this brief discussion. First, the growth of participation in countryside recreation during the post-war years was perceived as a problem, to which the 1967 and 1968 Countryside Acts were intended as a solution. These Acts were in large part intended to reduce the perceived conflicts of interest which the growth in recreation activity caused land-owning, land using, conservation and established recreation interests. The provision made by these Acts for recreation was tailored to meet these objectives, in particular by means of policies of concentration in country parks. Discouragement of recreational use of other parts of the countryside and 'de-marketing' strategies in national parks similarly became part of the means of attaining these objectives. Secondly, policy appears to have been determined largely by the characteristics of existing

demand, and by pressure groups. Although the evidence presented here has necessarily been limited by the scale of this enquiry, it nevertheless points strongly to the conclusion that a major aspect of countryside recreation strategy in the second phase was concerned with influencing and manipulating the movement of visitors to the countryside, and that both the provision of access and the establishment of structural facilities were employed to a considerable extent as part of the machinery of persuasion.

# 4: The Management Era.

This chapter is concerned with the third stage in Sidaway's (1982a) classification, which is that of management. Unlike the earlier phases, which were triggered by Acts of Parliament, the management era evolved more gradually, and cannot as easily be associated with one significant event. Nevertheless, the management era is clearly characterised by a different philosophy from earlier phases. It is also based on a different series of assumptions from those which underpinned earlier policies.

The management era is based on a radically different social and economic climate from the previous stages. The major influences are a slowdown of growth, a scarcity of resources, the greater availability of free time, the changing structure of society and the changing role of leisure in society (Chairmens Policy Group, 1983). Hence policy is aimed largely at meeting the needs of individuals and making the most effective use of scarce resources to do so. A further aim, which is qualitatively different from policy in earlier phases, is to encourage participation among those who are at present unable to take part (Countryside Commission, 1984).

Clearly, an important shift has occurred in the nature of policy between the planning and management stages. This shift in policy is underpinned by perceptions of and assumptions about the present state of society. Major changes have occurred in society in recent years; one of the most significant is the increase in the amount of

free or 'uncommitted' time available to individuals. This is primarily due to the increase in unemployment (from under one million in 1975 to over 3.4 million at present). However, shorter working hours, earlier retirement and short-time working have all contributed. The structure of population is also changing; the number of young adults will increase in the near future as will the number of elderly. There is a shift in population from the cities to smaller towns, and an increase in personal disposable income among some parts of the population, on the other hand there has been an increase in poverty among the unemployed, low paid, elderly, single parent families and other disadvantaged groups. The report "Leisure Policy for the Future" prepared by the Chairmen's Policy Group (1983) discusses all these social changes in detail and draws out their implications for leisure policy.

One of the key influences is the perception of a cessation of growth (growth being the major factor underpinning perceptions in the 1960's and 1970's), together with an emphasis on structure and changing patterns in society. Nowhere is the cessation of growth more marked than in local government expenditure: local authority expenditure in England and Wales fell by 9.6% in real terms in the period 1974/84 (DoE/Welsh Office, 1985; CSO, 1985). Nevertheless, spending on leisure services by local authorities has continued to grow, unlike spending on other services: expenditure on parks, open spaces and baths rose by 23% in real terms over the period 1974/84. As the Chairmen's Policy Group observed,

> "Net spending on leisure services in England and Wales by local authorities doubled between 1976/77 and 1981/82. Gross spending has in fact grown even more

> rapidly, the difference being met by an increase in income. The continued growth of net spending, at a time of retrenchment, is a further indication of the growing importance of leisure in the public services."
> (1983, p.71)

The need for economies throughout the public sector has led to a very cost-conscious approach in managing resources. In attempting to make the most of limited resources, local authority departments have made extensive use of techniques such as management planning, market research and marketing. Recreation, though affected by financial stringency to a lesser degree nevertheless has taken on board all these developments.

The other major factor involved has been the perception of leisure policy as a means of enhancing quality of life, and this perception is undoubtedly linked to the patterns of spending noted above. This aspect of policy is clearly summed up by the Chairmen's Policy Group;

> "...great disparities remain. Millions still are unemployed; or on low incomes; or in unfit or cramped housing; or constrained by their own or their relatives ill-health or physical disability or by lack of personal transport. Millions are affected by loneliness.....by the privatisation which occurs in an increasingly home-centred society. Those who are concerned with leisure policy must take acount of their needs, as well as those of the more fortunate."
> (1983, p.32)

Constant reference is made in that document to meeting needs, in particular needs unmet by existing provision. The report stresses the importance of facilitating participation, not just the provision of access.

**The Regional Councils for Sport and Recreation.**

The earliest indications of these changes in policy came in the

various reports of the Regional Councils for Sport and Recreation. The move away from the exclusive aspects of policy is illustrated by the following quote from the South Western Regional Council;

> "There has been some emphasis in the past on the conflicts in the countryside between various interests. While we accept that conflict does exist, it is partly the result of such statements of conflict being self-fulfilling prophecies, it is also partly due to the absence of an understanding of the nature of the multiple countryside interests, constructive action and a will to reach agreement. We feel that the emphasis should be placed on the positive need for understanding and agreement and on the identification of common interests rather than those of conflict."
> (1979, para 4)

The Council recommended further that,

> "A general conclusion is that policies for recreation in the countryside need to be more positively constructed in the light of a clear understanding of its nature and importance in society."
> (South West Regional Council for Sport and Recreation, 1979, para 4.4)

The Regional Councils for Sport and Recreation only have advisory powers; nevertheless, the shift in the emphasis of policy from the dominant ideas of the planning era is quite clear. The promotion of interest and participation is stressed, as is the improvement of access to countryside, the management of land and people to meet specific needs and the encouragement of recreation.

The South West Regional Council (1979) identified as areas of priority the development of recreation facilities in deprived areas and the stimulation of participation among disadvantaged groups (para. 6.0). These sentiments are echoed in the reports of the other Regional Councils for Sport and Recreation, and other aspects of the current philosophy are also clearly seen.

The Southern Regional Council for Sport and Recreation, in its

Regional Strategy for Sport and Recreation, recommended investigation of the

> "problem of access to countryside and water areas which are at present inaccessible.... The case may be argued that conservation restraints are applied too strongly or unnecessarily, not recognizing that different types of recreation facility are more or less 'acceptable' in different circumstances."
>
> (1979, para 4.5.2)

Similarly, the Southern Regional Council argued that resources should be diverted towards meeting the needs of certain social groups and certain areas; they wished to

> "Encourage an appropriate distribution of finance and other resources and publicise examples of good management practice, which will help to improve the sport and recreation opportunities of relatively disadvantaged sections of the community."
>
> (1979, para 4.12.2)

An important aspect of the policy approach recommended by the Regional Councils for Sport and Recreation is the emphasis on considering the needs of the individual and tailoring provision, through management, towards meeting these needs.

The change in emphasis between the planning and the management phases is thus quite considerable. The underlying philosophy is of leisure and recreation as a contribution to the quality of life, as a panacea for other more deep-seated problems. Repeated claims are made for the therapeutic qualities of recreation, especially in those areas with considerable economic and social problems. The Northern Regional Council for Sport and Recreation (1980), for instance, suggested that priority should be given to sport and recreation in areas suffering from the problems of urban deprivation as a means of assisting the improvement of quality of

life (1980,para 3.2). The North West Regional Council for Sport and Recreation claimed that

> "Providing recreation facilities will make an area more attractive to industry, thus attracting investment and creating jobs. It will also lead to savings in expenditure on health, welfare and other public services."
>
> (1980, p.11)

The same Council also argued that more opportunities for recreation should be provided because of its contribution to, among other things, national prestige, visual amenity and reduction of vandalism. The West Midlands Regional Council made this point particularily strongly:

> "Sport and outdoor recreation are important, life enhancing activities: they are important and enjoyable in themselves and bring positive benefits to the individual and community. Sport and physical exercise play an important part in improving physical and mental health. Much human suffering and costs to industry and the community at large could be avoided if more people [would] take part in sport or take regular exercise. Sport and outdoor recreation have an important part to play in the lives of young people. It counters the boredom and frustration which lead to vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Recreation can play a vital social role in the lives of isolated members of the community."
>
> (1979, p.5)

The Council went on to warn

> "When the community neglects its responsibilities for providing the individual with opportunities for choice in the provision of sports and recreation facilities, it will rarely escape the long term consequences of this neglect."
>
> (1979, p.5)

These arguments clearly underly the social equity element of recent leisure policies.

**Countryside management.**

The main theme of the late seventies and eighties is management,

and this approach is clearly expressed in the reports of the Regional Councils for Sport and Recreation. Motivated by the need to use relatively scarce public sector resources in a cost effective way, the Councils recommended the involvement of the private and voluntary sectors, use of training of personnel to achieve high quality service provision, co-ordination of different agencies and the promotion of participation. As the North West Regional Council put it;

> "Of primary importance, therefore, is the urgent need for greater realisation of existing potential through more widespread and effective countryside management, and, in particular, the creation of a climate more conducive to involvement of the private and voluntary sectors."
>
> (1980, para 10.4)

The involvement of the voluntary sector has been recommended for the provision of low cost facilities such as footpath maintenance, access agreements, sign-posting, tree planting and information services. The involvement of the private sector, on the other hand, has been sought in the creation and operation of theme parks and similar capital intensive, single use leisure facilities in the countryside.

An interesting feature which has emerged from the management approach is the perception of leisure and recreation as a total package, involving management across a wide range of facilities. This point was made by all the Regional Councils for Sport and Recreation and is clearly illustrated by the remit of the Councils covering both sport and recreation. This integrated approach involves the perception of both urban and rural areas as having no specific boundary, but merging gradually; seeing leisure activities

as a continuum rather than dividing them up into discrete planning functions (Torkildsen, 1983). The implications of this change in official perception are quite far-reaching: the shift of emphasis from simply countryside recreation to leisure as a whole has brought with it a wider outlook, an acknowledgement of wider problems in both the field of leisure and the provision of local authority services and an integrated management strategy.

Traces of earlier attitudes remain in some of the Regional Councils recommendations. The Greater London and South East Council for Sport and Recreation recommended that

> "Local authorities and other public and private bodies are asked to identify and develop opportunities for informal countryside recreation in areas of deficiency, diverting attention from sensitive areas and respecting agricultural and other primary interests."
>
> (1979, p.10)

The North West Regional Council recommended promoting recreational use near towns, but decreasing use in remote areas (1980, p.11). However, the tenor of their report is slanted heavily towards the philosophies outlined above, those of promoting and increasing use especially among disadvantaged groups and managing scarce resources effectively.

A significant development from this period was that of marketing (Wills, 1977; Gordon, 1980). The twin objectives of promoting use and enabling disadvantaged groups to participate meant that target groups had to be identified, isolated and then effectively sold the facilities concerned. Furthermore, the emphasis on the needs of the individual (e.g. Northern Regional Council for Sport and Recreation, 1980, para 3.2) implied that these needs had to be

identified, and then provision tailored to suit. Therefore a market segmentation approach to both research and provision was introduced (e.g. Coopers Lybrand Associates, 1979; Sidaway, 1982a) which was aimed at finding out what different groups of people wanted and then managing resources to provide for these needs.

A considerable amount of this kind of research and related policy work has now been carried out in country parks in Nottinghamshire (Gordon, 1980; Jowell and Finch, 1982), on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council, with the aims of improving efficiency and increasing visitor use, enjoyment and revenue. Two significant aspects of this marketing strategy, which represent a radical departure from earlier philosophies of recreation planning and practice, were the use of advertising to promote the country parks, and the development of commercial facilities (such as a craft centre and shop) to maximise income (Gordon, 1980). The marketing approach is crucial to the management of recreation, since it involves keeping managers informed of trends and patterns of visitor use, so that service provision may also be improved and optimised. Marketing also plays an important part in social equity policies: in Nottinghamshire, for instance attempts have been made to increase participation among people who do not visit the countryside regularily, e.g. people without cars, ethnic groups or the disabled (Gordon, 1980). Research has been carried out to discover how these groups wish to enjoy the countryside, and provision has been made to enable their participation, for instance by providing public transport services to the country parks.

The first experiments in countryside management were carried out in the early 1970s, but, as Sidaway observed,

> "the late seventies was the time when management came into its own from sheer economic necessity ....management was transformed by the coincidental effects of economic forces...."
>
> (1982, p.5)

Patmore (1983) has discussed schemes of the middle 1970s such as the Tarn Hows, Goyt Valley and Upper Derwent schemes, which were aimed at the management of visitors to very popular sites in National Parks. These schemes involved the control of traffic, and provision of public transport and visitor facilities; however Patmore concluded,

> "It must not, of course, be imagined, that schemes of the kind described are the dominant feature of recreational provision in national Parks. Rather they represent either the response to unusually intense demand, or the seizing of an opportunity to redistribute existing demand and enhance the quality of the recreational experience. Far more typical are the modest additions to site facilities, the minor adjustments to site character, which are barely noticed by the visitor..."
>
> (1983, p.185)

The management approach has resulted in a wider range of provision being made than was the case in earlier phases of recreation planning. At one extreme is the sort of capital intensive provision described by Kellard (1980) at Britannia Park, a theme park located within a country park, comprising exhibitions, a craft centre, shopping complex, family amusement area and an arena for special events. At the other, Steeley (1980) describes the contribution of countryside management to low key solutions to visitor problems in country parks.

## Official policy in the 1980s

Official recreational policy at present might best be described as being in a state of flux. The Countryside Commission (1984) have accepted that previous assumptions were exaggerated, and that the impact of recreation on the countryside was not as severe as expected, and that new policy directions are now required. As the Countryside Commission have pointed out,

> "The last significant review of policies for countryside recreation was for the 1966 White Paper, Leisure in the Countryside. We now need a new approach in keeping with changed social patterns and needs."
>
> (1984, p.5)

There is thus at present a major re-appraisal of patterns of leisure and of access to the countryside with an update of the National Survey of Countryside Recreation to provide a picture of national trends, and a major study of access (Countryside Commission, 1984). The aim is to "develop and promote new policies for countyside recreation and access" (Countryside Commission, 1984, p.5).

This policy shift is rooted in the social changes noted at the beginning of this chapter (Countryside Commission, 1983), and is the latest development in the more flexiblle approach engendered by the philosophy of countryside management. However the different elements of management discussed above are all reflected already in various aspects of official policy.

The Countryside Commission's policies support both the acquisition of new sites for recreation, and the development and better management of existing sites and facilities (Countryside

Commission, 1984). In cases where sites are heavily used, particularily in upland areas, the policy is positive management of sites and visitors, with the redirection of use to specific sites, and provision of visitor facilities.

The Commission also wishes to promote better access to the countryside for townspeople, in particular by supporting small scale developments near towns. This aspect of policy is specifically aimed at providing opportunities for recreational participation by those people who normally are unable to take part - for instance, those who have no private transport, who suffer from poverty or are socially disadvantaged in some other way. Those living in inner city areas, relatively distant from countryside, are the main target of these policies.

Occasional, large scale facilities are also planned, for instance a nature park at Consall, Staffs., or the National Stone Centre in Derbyshire (Countryside Commission, 1984). These latter developments are paralleled by the policy of the English Tourist Board (1983) to develop attractions linked to the historic heritage or offering participative facilities, or on sites making use of the rural and industrial heritage. In particular the Board envisages theme parks or large scale leisure parks offering a wide range of facilities for all age groups.

Major emphasis is laid on access (Countryside Commission, 1983; 1984). As already noted above, the Commission has recently sponsored major studies of countryside visiting and access. A key aspect of policy is now centred on footpaths, with the aim of

providing access across wide areas of countryside, as opposed to the concentration of facilities and visitors sought during the planning era. The marketing and provision of sites is official policy, and this is reflected in the increasing amount of research which is being carried out to identify target audiences and appropriate marketing techniques (Countryside Commission, 1984).

Another important initiative on access was the recreational transport experiment (Countryside Commission, 1985). The experiment, funded by the Countryside Commission, involved the provision and promotion of recreational bus and train services to the countryside from urban areas, and also the co-ordination of ticket schemes to make the use of public transport simpler and cheaper. Originally intended as an experiment over a limited, three year period (1981-84) in West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester and the Peak District, the scheme has been considered so successful that it has been continued independently by the respective Passenger Transport Executives.

The ideas behind the recreational transport experiment are of interest because they reflect the various attitudes which appear to have underpinned policy in all three phases. There are four main reasons: a) social equity - facilitating access to the countryside for those without cars; b) lessening the impact of car borne visitors in the countryside; c) supporting threatened rural bus and train services; and d) that people's experience of the countryside is considered to be enhanced if visits are made by public transport, since such visits usually involve walking (Groome and

Tarrant, 1984). It is quite intriguing that the first of these reasons reflects the most recent philosophy of recreation practice, whilst the second reason is based on the values of the planning era of recreation policy and the fourth reason reflects the elite ideology of the first phase.

The management philosophy is also well illustrated by the development of the Groundwork schemes (Countryside Commission, 1984). These schemes involve partnership between the voluntary, private and public sectors, in order to make better use of land and resources to create recreational opportunities and access to the countryside. These schemes have concentrated on derelict or blighted countryside near, or even within, urban areas, e.g. river valleys in the Greater Manchester area. The emphasis is on rehabilition of such areas to improve amenity and provide recreational opportunities such as footpaths and visitor centres. Such schemes clearly demonstrate the Commission's emphasis on the recreational importance of green belts and urban countryside.

A further policy which exemplifies promotion of recreation opportunities is the provision of facilities for the disabled (Countryside Commission, 1984). The aim is to help the mentally and physically handicapped enjoy the countryside by devising activities to suit the needs of the disabled, and then actively promoting these activities.

The Countryside Commission for Scotland (1983) has a range of similar policies: urban fringe management projects; encouragement and promotion of visits by, and facilities for, the disabled; a

programme of research on trends and patterns of recreation in order to provide information for management; the management of areas of heavy use (particularly of the physical environment); occasional highly capital intensive recreation provision; recreational transport experiments; promotion of country parks and the use of footpath agreements to promote public access to countryside.

Finally, as an example of the radical change of philosophy and attitude in the provision of recreational opportunities in the countryside, the Countryside Commission (1983) has decided to promote the knowledge of public rights in the countryside, as well as the understanding of obligations. To this end, the Country Code has recently been rewritten to include details of what visitors are entitled to do, as opposed to the traditional list of what people ought and ought not to do.

**Assumptions and attitudes**

It is clear from the foregoing review that policies in recent years have changed dramatically from those of the designation and planning eras described by Sidaway (1982a). It is also clear that the philosophy underlying these policies is qualitatively different from previous assumptions and attitudes. It is worth looking at this philosophy in more detail, however, as in fact it is possible to suggest that it involves a number of tenuous assumptions, which may not be borne out in reality - in exactly the same way as earlier attitudes were not supported by evidence.

The first assumption concerns the emphasis laid on the value of recreation, which was particularly stressed by the Regional

Councils for Sport and Recreation. The idea that recreation has therapeutic effects, that it compensates for social and health problems, is not a new one (Cunningham, 1980); it was first propagated in Victorian times. However, there is very little empirical evidence which supports this contention, in particular in relation to social problems. The suggestions made that recreation can reduce costs to industry and society (West Midlands Regional Council for Sport and Recreation, 1979) or that it can alleviate some of the problems of urban deprivation (Northern Regional Council for Sport and Recreation, 1980) are little more than assumptions based on wishful thinking rather than empirical evidence.

It is possible that, as Bramham and Henry (1985) have suggested, recreation and leisure have been increasingly favoured as a solution to social problems, in the same way as the rational recreation movement of Victorian times (Cunningham, 1980). The trend in leisure spending as compared with other aspect of public expenditure, noted above, supports such an explanation. Bramham and Henry (1985) have in fact argued that government in recent years has favoured spending on leisure as a short term solution to some of the wider problems caused by the decline in public expenditure. As investment in infrastructure, housing and social services has fallen, the argument goes, spending on leisure has been intended to ameliorate some of the problems of urban deprivation which result.

The second assumption follows on from the first, and concerns the notion that current policies will in fact accomplish to some extent the social equity concerns of policy. Social equity aspects of

policy are clearly evident in many projects, such as provision of recreational opportunities in the urban fringe and marketing of recreational facilities to increase participation by groups who currently are not able to participate. These aspects of policy are aimed in particular at the socially disadvantaged and low income groups living in the inner cities.

Some research, however, indicates that present policies may not in fact contribute a great deal towards improving the availability of recreation opportunities among these groups. Work by Sidaway and Duffield (1984) and Harrison (1983) suggests that the provision of recreational facilities in the urban fringe does not cater for disadvantaged inner city residents in the way that current policy intends. Rather, site surveys have shown that the clientele of such sites is predominantly drawn from suburban areas close to the sites, and inner city residents are still highly under-represented among visitors to such sites.

Similarily, various attempts at providing public transport to enable people without cars to visit the countryside have had mixed results. A review by the Countryside Commission for Scotland/Fife Regional Council (1981) indicated that most public transport schemes have not proved popular. All had run at a considerable loss and required considerable subsidy; many had been withdrawn after only one or two seasons. The Countryside Commission's recreational transport experiment in Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire has proved more viable, but research has shown that the scheme appeals far more to those people who visit the countryside regularly, than

to those who traditionally have been unable to participate frequently (Kassyk, 1985). However, Gordon (1980) reports some success achieved in encouraging visits to country parks in Nottinghamshire by various disadvantaged groups, although only as a result of a very intensive and costly marketing strategy.

This evidence casts some doubt on the success of the social equity aspects of current policy. Further research is required to ascertain whether existing policies may be adjusted to achieve these aims, or whether more far reaching social investment is a necessary precondition to enable inner city residents and other disadvantaged groups to participate more fully in a wide range of leisure activities.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed recent developments in policy. These developments clearly demonstrate that there has been a radical change in policy over the past decade, and that the impact of this change is still continuing. The philosophy and assumptions underlying policy have changed also. In particular, a concern with social equity and facilitation of recreational access and opportunity has recently assumed a growing importance in policy. Nevertheless, aspects of earlier policies still appear to have some influence on practice and the following chapter will attempt to draw together the various strands of the philosophies underlying each of the three periods of policy and assess their current impact.

# 5: Attitudes towards Recreation

The underlying theme of the previous three chapters has been that of attitudes towards recreation in the countryside. In the first period, the key attitudes related to appropriate modes of behaviour in the countryside; in the second phase attitudes reflected the perception of recreation as a problem; and in the most recent era recreation has been seen as a social good provided to improve the quality of people's lives. It appears however, that these attitudes have not been solely confined to the periods described, and this chapter discusses the balance between these sets of attitudes.

It appears that the official reaction to the increased use of the countryside in the 1950s and 1960s was based on two separate assumptions. First, the perceived impact of visitors on the wildlife, agriculture and other land-using interests (see for example the impact charts in 'The Countryside in 1970' Conference, 1964); and second, the perceived impact of visitors on long established, 'traditional' modes of recreation behaviour. As Fitton (1979) has noted, the difference between these two assumptions has not always been made explicit and it can be argued that in particular the former has often been used as a justification for the latter.

There are numerous references in the literature which indicate that certain recreation activities are perceived as being of greater value than others. Professor Buchanan, for instance, claimed at the second 'The Countryside in 1970' Conference

> "The conflict between rural life and activities cannot but result in the gregarious car user increasing in number every summer season; penetrating into every nook and cranny of the countryside between every known byway; parking on every available piece of ground; parking on every level highway berth; spreading danger, noise, fumes and visual intrusion; and wanting, of course, sanitary facilities. He will eventually crowd out, befoul and ruin the countryside which smaller groups are seeking to enjoy in their separate ways."
>
> (1966, p.62)

The opinion of the House of Lords Select Committee on Sport and Leisure that provision for those who are not looking for 'truly natural countryside' would leave the 'dedicated walker, mountaineer and nature lover' (1973, para. 225) free to explore the countryside similarly indicates that certain types of behaviour have been considered less appropriate and should be curbed in order to enable those who subscribe to the values of the traditional ideology to pursue their more worthy activities in peace.

Clearly, conflict has occurred between 'traditional' and established recreation interests and the informal, uncommitted day visitor. The requirement of solitude is certainly threatened by any increase in the number of people visiting a beauty spot. Similarly, traditional recreation interests have viewed with disfavour 'mechanised' and 'noisy' pursuits. K.R. Ashby, then chairman of the Ramblers Association, commented in evidence to the House of Commons Expenditure Committee

> "I am very strongly against what I see as sports council interests trying to take over the countryside for their own purposes...I find myself continually arguing against sectional sporting interests, mostly mechanised and noisy interests."
>
> (1976, p.429)

Taylor (1982) has observed that, in many such cases, what is in fact being 'conserved' is the enjoyment of the countryside by

another group of users, and he has pointed to the tendency of assuming that there are right and wrong ways of behaving in the countryside, and the consequent possibility of excluding different types of use from a presumed higher sense of values (Dartington Amenity Research Trust, 1979). It may be argued that the primacy of preservation in national park policy, particularly following the Department of the Environment's (1976) acceptance of the Sandford Committee's recommendation that conservation should take precedence over development in the national parks, is intended to protect an established type of recreational behaviour, by a particular group of people, as much as it is concerned with the practical preservation of landscape and the conservation of wildlife. This point has been echoed by Sidaway (1982b, p. 88) who has noted that the conservation argument has been used as a 'filter' to exclude certain recreational interests and activities. It appears likely therefore that proponents of the traditional ideology have tried to defend their own interests by claiming moral and ecological superiority for their own form of recreation behaviour.

The proposals made by the National Park Policies Review Committee (1974) for National Heritage Areas, for instance, also demonstrated the influence of traditional values. The Committee's recommendations illustrate the attitudes behind the proposal:

> "Windermere, for all its character, is a place of people and buildings, of cars and boats. A few miles away are the empty hills, where the shapes and sounds of nature are dominant. Both areas...offer different values. We believe that there are areas of our national parks, most of which will be relatively small, which have such unsullied rural beauty and character that they should be sustained for future generations as jealously as we sustain our cathedrals, castles and ancient monuments." (p. 101)

Apart from the landscape conservation aspect of these proposals, there was a significant recreational objective:

> "The secondary objective of policy for heritage areas would be quiet and congruous public enjoyment."
>
> (p. 102)

Car access by visitors to such areas would have been forbidden and the Committee proposed that if use became 'so intense' that the qualities of the areas were threatened, then measures would have to be taken to restrain use. The Countryside Review Committee (1979) made similar recommendations for the reorganisation of the national park system and these proposals also demonstrate traditional, and exclusive, attitudes towards recreation. The Committee, which was composed of supposedly impartial civil servants, suggested that 'core areas' should be established in the national parks, within which access could be regulated and all development banned. Although these proposals have not become policy, they were clearly aimed at protecting opportunities for direct and solitary contact with nature, in a manner consistent with the traditional ideology of countryside recreation.

The national park plans contain evidence of the influence of traditional values on policy. In a review of these plans, Dennier (1978) has noted that the attitudes of the National Park Authorities towards 'unsuitable' activities have not relented, despite the increasing popularity of such activities:

> "Traditional thinking on outdoor recreation has favoured quiet, active open air pursuits such as walking, climbing and sailing. This continues and policies aim to reduce severe clashes of interest between these 'legitimate' users and between them and other users or landowners." (p.178)

Attitudes towards other forms of recreational use indicate the

influence of the traditional ideology:

> "it is clear that the car-bound ambler is generally accepted now...There is, however, some determination to see the passive sightseer kept within the most popular parts of the parks."
>
> (Dennier, 1978, p. 178)

The plan for the Dartmoor national park considers certain recreational activities undesirable within the park, because of noise or possible disturbance. One of the policy objectives set out in the plan is

> "to maintain the quiet quality of the national park by seeking to control all sources of noise."
>
> (Dartmoor National Park Authority, 1977, p.22)

The plan also recommends the discouragement of vehicular recreation access in high moorland landscapes and contains proposals for the eventual complete elimination of visitors' vehicles from high moorland areas. Similar proposals are found in the Brecon Beacons National Park Plan (Brecon Beacons National Park Committee, 1977). These policies clearly indicate the influence of traditional values of recreation, which require solitary contact with the natural environment, and scorn the use of artificial or mechanical intermediaries such as motor vehicles or recreational equipment. The Dartmoor National Park Plan justifies its policy in the following terms

> "Visitors in quantity diminish the scene...Any 'wilderness' is devalued - maybe destroyed as an experience - by the number of other walkers in view."
>
> (Dartmoor National Park Authority, 1977, p. 13)

The discussion in Chapter Three has suggested that the contribution of pressure groups to 'The Countryside in 1970' Conferences implies that they played a similar role to that of the access and

preservation movements in 1949 in relation to the Countryside Acts of 1967/68. The traditional countryside interest groups were particularly vocal in the response to the 'Fourth Wave' and it can be argued that the opposition of these groups to the mass influx of visitors to the countryside, the opposition to 'mechanised' and 'noisy' pursuits and 'gregarious holidaymakers' reflected attempts to protect the traditional forms of countryside recreation.

Law (1974) has observed that planning agencies at that time were more likely to promote conservation rather than recreation. Lowe and Goyder's (1983) survey of conservation and amenity preservation groups indicates the considerable scope available to these groups to influence both local and national government. Curry's (1982) survey of decision makers in planning authorities indicates that decisions are rarely made in an objective environment or on the basis of rational planning theory. Rather, constraints are imposed by the interests of local elected representatives and lack of finance, while there is often ambiguity or vagueness in planning directives on the question of how to carry out policies. In this situation, as Curry has shown, the planner's own values, the interests of pressure groups and the planner's perception of public attitudes play a significant role in the decision making process. Organisations such as the National Trust, CPRE and local Naturalists Trusts are perceived by planning authorities to represent the attitudes and opinions of the public, in view of the lack of information from other members of the public (Lowe and Goyder, 1983).

These considerations indicate considerable scope for the influence

of traditional values on the making of policy and on the carrying out of the functions of planning authorities. Indeed, Dower (1978) has argued that, with regard to the national parks, policy has been aimed at

> "Countryside recreation for all, but only such recreation as suits our perception of the countryside in its beauty and quietude. This approach is alive and well, in our national parks, as an inspection of the Sandford report, or any national park plan will testify."
>
> (p. 18)

Willey (1957), writing nearly thirty years ago, commented that it was a common attitude that nature should be revered, not made the locus of pleasure. The continuing influence of such attitudes on national park policies is succinctly summarised in the following excerpt from a review of the report of the National Park Policies Review Committee:

> "Indeed so strong is the message about the [national] parks being no place for noisy pursuits, coupled with the ten maxims of the country code, that one begins to see the parks as outdoor cathedrals offering a communion of silence in sanctuaries immured against the excesses of industrial, commercial and population pressures. No non-conforming voices are heard in the report to proclaim the cheerful noise of public enjoyment."
>
> (Hall, 1974, p. 507)

The development of the country park can also be seen in terms of these attitudes to nature. The general ambiguity of the wording in the Countryside Act -- 'places for open air enjoyment' -- gave local authorities few guidelines as to what should constitute provision. Consequently many authorities first adopted a low-key approach, and in the first ten years or so following the introduction of the 1967/68 Acts, the majority of country parks provided a minimum of facilities. It was noted in Chapter Three

that, as a result of this interpretation of policy, conservation has been accorded higher priority over recreation in some country parks (Curry, 1983).

Initially policy for country parks was concerned only with the provision of an environment for contact with nature, in the same way that the Victorian urban parks provided an environment for nature contact rather than an environment for activity (Tourism and Recreation Research Unit, 1983). In recent years however, this policy has changed, as the discussion in Chapter Four has illustrated, particularly with the development of capital intensive leisure facilities in country parks (e.g. Kellard, 1980).

Attitudes and values tend to be left unsaid and unacknowledged in discussion or in written evidence; they form the assumptions on which statements and decisions are based. At best, it is very difficult to infer such attitudes from policy statements. Nevertheless the evidence discussed here and in Chapter Two, although limited and incomplete, does suggest that the attitudes and values of the traditional ideology of countryside recreation have had an influence on the development of recreation policy, most notably with respect to the national parks, but also in relation to other parts of the countryside. These attitudes and values are by no means the only ones which have influenced the development of policy. Others have been noted here and in earlier chapters, but the discussion has concentrated on these particular attitudes rather than attempt a comprehensive review of all possible attitudes.

It has been argued (Curry, 1985) that policy for countryside recreation sites is actually in a state of flux at present. The dominant influences of the three phases of policy identified above are all at work in the making and implementation of policy at present, as this and the previous chapter have demonstrated. Curry (1985) has argued that what is not clear is the relative importance of each idea: should provision cater for need or for demand? Should policy seek to control, facilitate or actively promote recreational participation? Should policy have a social welfare element? Should the emphasis be on site location or site type? What kind of recreation should be provided? Current practice includes all these elements of policy, but the balance between them has not yet been determined. It was noted in Chapter Four that official policy is indeed being reviewed (Countryside Commission, 1984).

These observations focus attention on the question 'what kind of recreation should be provided for in the countryside?' Recent emphasis on marketing and market research suggests that this question may be answered on the basis of the attitudes, values and preferences of the clientele for whom provision is made.

The discussion in earlier chapters has shown that, historically, one particular ideology of recreation has been dominant. However as Sadler and Carlson have noted, the physical expression of aesthetic values represents only the "predominant taste of an influential minority" (1982, p.4). Both Glacken (1966) and Bunkse (1978) have pointed out that written records of environmental attitudes represent only the attitudes held by a highly literate, intellectual minority:

> "The historical attitudes of commoners and women can at best be inferred only from the records of male literati. In [such] research of contemporary attitudes the results are frequently at variance with lived reality."
>
> (Bunkse, 1978, p. 551)

The Romantic poets, the literary circles of the nineteenth century and those involved in conservation and recreation pressure groups can all be considered to be elite groups, in the sociological sense of having distinct interests and values from the rest of society, and the power to realise those interests. It may be argued that there are links between these groups in terms of the communication of elite values. The inference that those with an interest in countryside conservation and recreation would subscribe to a set of values derived from the ethics of the Romantic poets appears to be a plausible one; however there is little evidence to indicate how extensively these values have diffused beyond specific interest groups. Thus the question arises: have the environmental values of an elite become widely accepted in the latter half of the twentieth century, is the traditional ideology still the preserve of an intellectual minority, or has it largely now been relegated to the realm of history? If the latter is true, what is the predominant attitude to the recreational use of the countryside? What is the meaning and the role of countryside recreation in people's lives?

There is plenty of evidence of an interest in nature and the countryside among the working class people of the industrial towns and cities of the nineteenth century, caused by a desire to escape the miseries of urban life. As Hill has said,

> "Limited though their hours away from the factory were, the people were eager to escape from the towns. Mrs. Gaskell wrote in 'Mary Barton' (1848): 'There are a class of men in

> Manchester and all the manufacturing districts of Lancashire who know the name and habitat of every plant within a day's walk from their dwellings.' In fact the more venturesome spiritswould steal a holiday of a day or two when any particular plant was in flower, for the purpose of fetching it home."
>
> (1980, p. 16)

Hill (1980) has suggested that the growth in rambling in the latter part of the nineteenth century in the north of England (which provided the springboard for the formation of the working class rambling clubs) was motivated by different intentions and was intended to fulfil different needs from those of the Romantic poets and writers. The working people

> "came not...to make a new religiosity from the scenery as did so many eighteenth and nineteenth century writers, but to recapture the humanity which they had lost in the factories and the mines of the industrial revolution...to gain freedoms from the antagonisms of the workplace they went to the countryside, not to look at nature with the dreaming gaze of poets but to regain good fellowship, amidst the mountains and dales, away from the antagonistic relationship of the factory."
>
> (Hill, 1980, p. 15)

Hill quotes from one of the ramblers' publications of 1920, the Sheffield Clarion Handbook, which suggests that;

> "the joy of walking...and the pleasure of companionship, are amongst nature's best gifts to man."
>
> (1980, p. 15)

A different view, indeed, from that of the Romantic poets, and one which clearly originated in different social circumstances and sought to fulfil different needs. The evolution of such attitudes is of particular interest, and importance, in view of the large numbers of people who now visit the countryside, and the fact that so little is known about their attitudes and opinions. Contemporary attitudes to the countryside and its use for recreation have been the subject of assumptions and polemic, as the

evidence presented in this and previous chapters have shown. Elson (1977a) has pointed out, despite the considerable amount of research carried out during the planning era, very little information was collected about visitors to the countryside beyond their socio-economic characteristics and patterns of participation. The more recent emphasis on market research (Jowell and Finch, 1982) has only just begun to provide information which allows an assessment of the range of attitudes.

**Conclusion**

The opening chapters of this thesis have reviewed the development of countryside recreation policy in terms of the attitudes and assumptions which appear to have underpinned or informed that policy. The discussion has shown that policy has largely been developed in response to pressure from various interests in order to solve some particular problem. The perception of these problems - the need for access, the 'fourth wave', constraints on the under-privileged - have been coloured by prevailing assumptions and thus policy has reflected these assumptions. Policy in the past has sought to cater primarily for certain types of recreation. Policy at present is in a state of flux; although the emphasis has changed significantly from the earlier period to making a much wider range of provision available, the precise direction and intent of policy appear to lack clarification.

These points indicate that there is a need to identify the precise nature of demand, so that policy may be tailored more closely to the needs and preferences of both actual and potential visitors to

the countryside. Research into the basic perceptions and meanings of recreation is required to answer these questions, if existing patterns are not simply to be perpetuated. The existence of the traditional ideology as a discernible attitude set provides a framework within which to look at perceptions of, and attitudes towards countryside recreatioon. The questions this thesis seeks to answer are as follows;

a) What are the dominant attitudes to nature and to the recreational use of the countryside today?

b) Do these attitudes differ significantly from the values of the traditional ideology?

c) Does the traditional ideology exist as an identifiable set of values held by a specific group of countryside users, and who subscribes to these values?

The following chapter will review the results of contemporary research on perceptions of, attitudes towards and recreational behaviour in the countryside to identify what is at present known about the answers to these questions.

# 6: Conceptual Framework

> "It is about time somebody started asking people what they wanted. It's alright for the Countryside Review Committee to suggest 'country leisure parks', but who did they ask about that? Nobody. I know of market research on whether people like thick or thin cigarettes; there is an American firm trying to foist soy-bean bacon on the long suffering British housewife, and on those two pieces of research more money was probably spent than has been spent in the last 15 years on finding out what people want in the countryside."
>
> (Martin Fitton, CRRAG Conference, 1978)

The aim of this chapter is to present the research questions, discuss the theoretical and conceptual background to these questions and to examine the literature pertaining to these aspects of recreation behaviour. The scope of the review is limited to the British literature in empirical matters, although it draws heavily on theoretical aspects of research in the United States.

In the previous chapters it was contended that little is known about what people actually want to do in the countryside, and what countryside recreation means to them. This area of enquiry can be sub-divided into a series of more specific research questions:

a) What are the main dimensions of perception of the countryside, and how do these vary from person to person?

b) What are people's attitudes to the countryside as an environment for recreation -- how and to what extent does the 'traditional ideology' influence their attitudes?

c) What are the most preferred aspects of the countryside experience and how do these vary among the population?

d) What are people's preferences for different kinds of recreational environment in the countryside, and for different levels of provision?

e) What do people do in countryside recreation and is there any pattern to these activities?

It is necessary to examine the theoretical and conceptual nature of recreation behaviour and its determinants in some detail, in order to establish the relevance of these questions. The Tourism and Recreation Research Unit (1977) has conceptualised the determinants of leisure behaviour in the notion of the 'leisure system'. This comprises the following elements: individual constraints (economic, social, temporal, knowledge) which either permit or constrain participation; individual perceptions, preferences, interests and motivations, which predispose the individual to participate; the social context, which permits, favours or legitimises certain activities and restricts others; and finally the supply environment which determines what is available.

The present research is particularly concerned with the second of these elements, the perceptions, preferences, and interests which motivate the individual to participate. It is also concerned, to a lesser extent, with the third element, the social context. The supply environment has been the subject of the previous chapters, and the constraint factor lies largely (but not completely) outside the scope of the project. If the constraint factor is set aside, leisure behaviour may be construed as the result of cognitive processes set in a social context. In the following section, the nature of these processes and the influence of the social context is examined in detail.

**Cognition**

Any situation (social or environmental) is a mental construct: it is defined differently by the individuals involved, because they

are more or less aware of, and influenced by, different elements of that situation (Berger and Luckman, 1967). Cognition may be defined as the psychological processes whereby individuals obtain, organise, store and use information (Gold, 1980). It includes perception, a more specific term which relates to the psychological function that enables the individual to convert sensory stimulation into organised and meaningful information (Gold, 1980). Throughout this dissertation, however, these two terms will be used interchangeably; this interpretation is supported by Gold who argues that:

> "Any distinction between perception and cognition should therefore be seen mainly as a heuristic device rather than as a fundamental dichotomy in mental processes."
>
> (1980, p. 20)

The basic assumption of the perception/cognition approach is that an individual's actions are based on the environment as he or she sees it, and not as it really is. As Lowenthal has stated,

> "the real world lies beyond our complete understanding because everything we recognise in our environment is the result of a complex selective process, based partly on cultural, partly on social and partly on personal factors. The end result of this process is reflected in our behaviour and actions."
>
> (1967, p. 32)

Recent reviews by Pocock and Hudson (1978), Moore (1979), Gold (1980) and Saarinen and Sell (1981) have documented the increasing amount of empirical evidence which now supports these assumptions.

**The cognitive process**

Behaviour may be conceptualised as the result of the cognitive process (Figure 3.1): the individual builds up an overall image of the world through his or her beliefs, attitudes and values and this image will influence behaviour in a given direction, depending on

the effects of certain intervening variables.

---

Figure 6.1 The cognitive process

Perception - Belief - Attitude - Value - Intervening variables - Behaviour

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There is still considerable confusion of terminology in this area (Gold, 1980), which is partly due to the inherent complexity of mental processes which defies exact classification. A tentative classification of the constructs which are taken to represent the products of the process of cognition is however possible. An attitude may be defined as a learned predisposition to respond in a consistent direction with respect to a given object or person (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Attitudes may be conceptualised as having two elements: belief and affect. The belief element involves knowledge about the attitude object, while the affective element involves evaluation (expression of positive or negative feeling) towards the object. Values are composite constructs of attitudes (Meddin, 1976) which may be defined as referring to specific modes of conduct or end states of existence which are personally or socially preferable to opposite modes of conduct or end states of existence (Rokeach, 1973). The image or 'schema' (Gold, 1980) is a combination of beliefs, attitudes and values and represents the totality of information and feelings held by an individual with respect to a composite entity, for example, 'the countryside'. In terms of this conceptualisation, an ideology is a socially shared construct of beliefs, attitudes and values, which

dictates appropriate goals and behaviour, and may be used to interpret an existing state of affairs in a manner consistent with the individual's other beliefs.

**Attitudes and behaviour**

The relationship between cognitive process and behaviour has been the source of extensive controversy (O'Riordan, 1976; Desbarats, 1983). Although this link has been assumed more often than explicitly tested in behavioural geography (Pocock and Hudson, 1978), in sociology and social psychology there have been numerous inconclusive studies pointing to the lack of a clear link between attitudes and behaviour (O'Riordan, 1976). The simple attitude/behaviour link may be criticised on three grounds. First, there is evidence to suggest that the relationship is a complex process, mediated by intervening variables and real world complications (Ehrlich, 1969; Desbarats, 1983). Attitudes and behaviour are themselves much more complex than the simplified variables which are often used in experimental situations: constraint rather than choice may influence behaviour; the individual needs adequate knowledge of the situation and of alternative means of action; he or she needs the power and the ability to act in a certain way; and the social situation must be conducive to the appropriate behavioural response (Ehrlich, 1969). Secondly, the concept of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) may be used to explain why individuals knowingly act inconsistently with their beliefs and attitudes: a person may hold a particular attitude, but will rationalize a contrary action on some other grounds. Finally, Ajzen and Fishbein (1977), in an exhaustive review of empirical

research on the subject, criticised a considerable number of studies for failing to specify precisely the 'action' and 'target' elements of the measures of behaviour used. They found that actions were "systematically related" (p. 888) to attitudes, when the nature of the attitudinal predictors and behavioural criteria were taken into consideration. They were thus able to conclude,

> "A person's attitude has a more consistently strong relation with his or her behaviour when it is directed at the same target and when it involves the same action."
>
> (p. 912)

**Sociological approaches**

To a large extent perspectives on cognition are drawn from psychology and are thus grounded in individualistic assumptions. An explicitly sociological viewpoint has been developed by Gerson and Gerson (1976) who have drawn attention to several key concepts in their discussion of 'place perspectives' (p. 196). They argue that individuals interact with each other to construct the nature of a place and the meaning of that place is simultaneously part of the individual cognitive process and part of a wider social process. These authors note that concepts such as the sentimental and ideological order of places demonstrate the intrinsically social nature of places. Symbolic, emotional or ideological meanings are socially constructed, they argue, and serve to create images of a place for audiences who may deal with that place. Individuals at a specific place need to reconstruct the perspectives maintained by other people there, they must make assumptions about what happens there and about the arrangements made by others to create and control viable social situations at that place. Gerson and Gerson note the consequences of the

institutionalisation of ideologies at specific places, and conclude,

> "the important point is that inquiries into the character of images as constituted by relations among people are long overdue."
>
> (p. 203)

Furthermore, since involvement by individuals in recreation does not arise in a vacuum but is behaviour that is culturally and socially influenced, attention must be directed towards the socio-cultural differences and similarities of these individuals (Burdge and Field, 1972). The meanings and definitions ascribed by socio-cultural groups to different leisure locations thus have a significant influence on behaviour. Research in the USA (Lee, 1972; 1977; Cheek, 1972; Cheek and Burch, 1976) has shown that shared images of places are held by groups of people and that these images ensure orderly group life and predictable behaviour. Cheek and Burch have argued that

> "in leisure locales...there are a diverse range of functions each with its specialised moral order, physical design and social structure to ensure particular behavioural response."
>
> (1976, p. 155)

These authors suggest that nature is managed to fit an ideal in parks, and as such provides a social environment for role release:

> "freedom exists because normative understanding and control are secure."
>
> (p. 160)

They contend that leisure choice and behaviour appear to be primarily determined by small and intersecting social circles: for instance, though nature and solitude are the central motives offered by wilderness visitors, there is in fact a crucial difference between verbal responses and actual behaviour. Hence

they conclude that nature is important primarily as a setting for reaffirming and strengthening already established social bonds: "solitude is a euphemism for keeping one's group together"(p. 167).

Lee (1972) has argued that outdoor recreation places are defined by possession, selective organisation and formal social control by those groups who use these places most often. Expectations about legitimate social control are understood by the dominant group and thus leisure time and the leisure environment are seen to be 'free' and normative constraints do not have to be enforced. Conflict, however, may arise if other groups do not share these perceptions and expectations: the quality of the recreational experience is closely linked to the opportunity to take for granted the behaviour of other visitors.

Further evidence to support these arguments comes from the work of Dottavio, O'Leary and Koth (1980) and Buchanan, Christensen and Burdge (1981) on the social interaction goals and behaviour of people involved in outdoor recreation in the USA. Both studies found support for the hypothesis that the social group is an explanatory variable in the process of selecting recreational activities. Buchanan et al. also found that the social group is the source of different meanings for activities and that some activities provide a wider range of opportunities for different experiences. This research is based on the assumption that the meaning of an object or phenomenon lies not in the object itself but is assigned by some social group and is supported by the work of Machlis, Field and Campbell (1981) and replicates Lee's (1972)

findings:

> "Man-environment interaction therefore, is a process where different types of social group define the meaning of objects so that all group members interpret these objects in a similar fashion."
>
> (p. 255)

It thus follows that those individuals who share the same set of social meanings and values will tend to share the same definition of a recreation place or activity. Hence the diagrammatic representation of the cognitive process in Figure 3.1 must be amended to included the social group, as well as the individual, in forming the image. At each stage concepts and meanings produced by the social group are integrated into the process.

If the proposition that different social groups have different perceptions of the countryside is accepted, then it is likely that groups such as recreation managers may have significantly different views from users. This issue has hardly been raised in Great Britain, although a considerable amount of research (Merriam, Wald and Ramsey, 1972; Twight and Catton, 1975; Foresta, 1980; and Wellman, Dawson and Roggenbuck, 1982) has shown that such differences certainly exist in the United States.

Further empirical evidence to confirm the role of individual and group perceptions in determining preferences, desired experiences and actual behaviour is provided by other research studies from the USA. Devall and Harry (1981), in an article aptly entitled 'Who hates whom in the great outdoors' found that groups of respondents perceived certain activities in different ways, and that such perceptions were the basis of patterns of conflict and resentment. Research by Schreyer, Jacob and White (1981) has shown that

individuals have different symbolic images of the national parks, and that these perceptions influence the visitors' desired experiences. The concept of 'environmental style' (Williams and Schreyer, 1981) embodies the perceived degree of interaction with the environment involved in different recreational pursuits and can be related to the experiences sought by visitors. Research by Cooksey, Dickinson and Loomis (1982), using the concept of psychological outcomes to describe desired recreation experiences, indicates that a model which distinguishes between environmental rewards and costs best explains environmental preferences between different leisure activities.

The concept of relative perception is illustrated by the work of Clark et al. (1971) in the USA. They surveyed the users of developed campgrounds and their perceptions of the recreational environment. Over 90 percent of the respondents considered 'gaining awareness of unspoiled beauty' important; and similarly high proportions of the sample found 'getting satisfaction from solitude and emotional tranquillity' and 'getting away from other people' to be important. These findings, however, contrasted significantly with the highly sociable lifestyle of these car-campers in large, crowded and developed campgrounds. This research suggests that although certain words (e.g., solitude, tranquillity, natural beauty) have what appear to be commonly accepted meanings, not everyone may subscribe to these meanings. The authors concluded that, although a majority of individuals may share the dominant values of 'traditional' recreation, some people may have different notions of the kinds of behaviour that are appropriate

within these values and different standards for what constitutes attainment of these goals.

**Need Satisfaction**

Parallel to the cognitive process as a determinant of behaviour, the concept of need satisfaction may be used to explain the origins and goals of behaviour. Figure 6.2 shows a diagrammatic representation of this idea. From this point of view, recreation activity can be conceptualised as the pursuit of a satisfying experience. The motivation to activity comes largely from general lifecycle pre-occupations which are channelled into more specific interests by a variety of

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Figure 6.2 The Need Satisfaction Framework

Need-Preoccupation-Interest-Activity-Experience-Satisfaction

---

social and personal factors. Recreational activity is thus seen as leading to satisfaction of the original need through a particular experience.

It may be argued that the concept of recreational need appeared as an antithesis to the supply and demand framework which dominated recreation studies in Great Britain until the mid 1970s. An emphasis on the individual, as opposed to the aggregate, brought about partly by Rapoport and Rapoport's (1975) research on the influence of the family lifecycle on leisure behaviour, led to the development of the need satisfaction framework as a more appropriate approach to understanding and explaining participation in different leisure activities (Elson, 1977b). The Social Science

Research Council and Sports Council (1978) recommended a need for research on "motivations, satisfactions and the mechanisms of choice in leisure activities" (para.35).

Human needs have been categorised by two psychologists, Murray (1938) and Maslow (1954). The former classified a wide range of needs in detail and related them to personality. The latter conceived of a hierarchy of needs, with physiological and safety/security needs being first order needs; then love, belonging and social needs; esteem (achievement and recognition); self actualisation (realising one's fullest potential); and finally knowledge, understanding and aesthetic needs. Maslow argued that it was necessary to fulfil lower order needs before higher order ones became apparent, a position which has been criticised by, among others, Iso-Ahola (1980).

The report by DART/IFER (1976) on Leisure Provision and Human Need developed the concept of recreational need by examining its evolution throughout the lifecycle and by assessing the role of recreation and leisure provision in life and society. They expanded the concept of need into general lifecycle pre-occupations, which are channelled into interests, which may then be realised in activities, while retaining the idea of need as felt by the individual or seen by others as a requirement. In an examination of how provision fits these needs, the report suggested that few leisure providers have made serious attempts to probe what people's requirements are; that in some cases statutory objectives are vague or ill-defined; and that elements of elitism or exclusiveness may hinder a wide range of provision. The report

stressed the lack of information on the meaning of participation to participants, and concluded that it is not known what value to place on the recorded existence and usage of facilities at the present time. It may be argued, as in the preceeding chapters, and as Dower (1978), Fitton (1979), Bacon (1980) and Shoard (1979; 1980) have done, that these criticisms can be applied specifically to much of the past history of countryside recreation provision.

Despite this comprehensive theoretical and conceptual assessment of need, the research team's final report (Dower, Rapoport, Strelitz and Kew, 1980) indicates that it has proved difficult to use the concept, because of its inherent complexity and the further complications of factors such as social context, personal interests, lifecycle and lifestyle. The authors argue, however, that provision should relate more closely to the character and needs of the groups it is seeking to serve. Only work using satisfaction statements (Haworth, 1982) has made explicit use of the perspective provided by need satisfaction; this research represents a compromise attempt to resolve some of the practical difficulties while still using the basic conceptual framework of motivation.

Allen (1982) has reviewed a series of studies done in the USA, using Murray's (1938) classification of needs. This research perspective is of a highly exploratory nature and is based on small samples, mostly of college students, in experimental settings. The earlier studies attempted to relate individual needs to individual activities; the more recent studies involve a more complex research

design using multivariate analysis to isolate clusters of needs and activities, and to look for interrelationships between these clusters. However, as Allen (1982) has pointed out, social influences and environmental factors are likely to mediate between personality needs and leisure interests, and thus the relationship will be highly complex in reality. This research direction, together with the work done by Haworth (1982), does, however, indicate the viability of the need satisfaction concept.

It has been argued that outdoor recreation planning, both in the United Kingdom and in North America, has tended to cater for the higher order needs of knowledge, self-actualisation and aesthetics (Yapp, 1979; Wyman, 1982), rather than the lower order needs of identity and social interaction. Yapp has argued further (supported by Donald and Havighurst, 1959) that working-class people tend to be oriented towards social interaction needs in leisure activities, whereas self-actualisation, knowledge and aesthetics tend to be middle-class traits, dependent on, among other things, a higher level of education. It is, of course, easy to assume that the needs and values of one section of society, the middle classes, articulated by vocal pressure groups, studied by middle-class researchers and planned for by middle-class planners and resource managers, are relevant to other sections of society.

From this discussion of the concept of recreational need it follows that provision should seek to cater for the widest range of possible experiences in countryside recreation. This position is embodied in the concept of the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (Brown, Driver and McConnell, 1978) which takes the view that

planning and management of recreation opportunities should seek to maximise the variety of possible experiences which may be obtained from a range of different activities. It should be noted, of course, that one activity may provide different people with different experiences, or different activities may provide the same experiences. The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum has received some attention in the literature in the USA (Clark and Stankey, 1979) but so far there is no indication of the adoption of similar ideas in Britain.

In a wider sense, recreational behaviour is partly the result of large-scale processes operating within the structure of society. This relates to the arguments presented in the previous chapters: economic and physical constraints and dominant value systems play their part in directing and influencing modes of perception and behaviour. Walker (1979) and Wyman (1982) have, among others, considered leisure in its place in a materialist society, where leisure goods and services are produced for consumption. Wyman argues that experiences, events and phenomena, as well as material goods, become commodities, and in this sense nature and the countryside are leisure goods 'produced' for consumption. This process is sustained by, and itself reinforces, the ideological dichotomy between city and countryside (Williams, 1973), presenting nature and the countryside as a thing apart, to be consumed somewhere outside the city, at weekends and on holiday, in much the same way as other leisure goods are consumed.

In summary, recreation behaviour in the countryside, within the

framework outlined here and excluding constraints and supply factors, is a result of individual cognitive processes, motivations and shared social meanings. Patterns of behaviour, as Day (1978) has observed, are influenced by attitudes arising from differences in lifestyle, sub-culture and ideology. It may be possible that 'traditional' values of recreation are largely based on the educated, middle-class sub-culture and life-style. It is equally possible that different values have developed from the aspirations and expectations of an urban, industrial working class. Such distinctions may well have become blurred over time, especially with the blurring of social barriers in the second half of the 20th century. It is likely, however, that leisure behaviour in the countryside, being a social activity, is influenced by a traditional code of values and ethics, which are presented to society through the various media as appropriate standards for behaviour. Three different mechanisms may, therefore, be postulated to account for the present development of attitudes to the countryside. Either different groups in society hold significantly different set of attitudes, or a diluted version of the traditional ideology of the countryside is held by the majority, or, as Clark et al. (1971) have argued, individuals espouse the goals of the traditional ideology but have different standards for their attainment.

The five research questions outlined at the beginning of the chapter can now be related to the theoretical framework. The first two questions, on perceptions and attitudes, clearly relate to the cognitive process. Preferences for particular recreational

environments are also part of the cognitive process, since they reflect attitudes to recreational use of the countryside. The most preferred aspects of the countryside experience may be conceptualised as part of the need-satisfaction framework. The reasons for which people enjoy visiting the country, or the benefits countryside recreation is seen to provide may be seen as needs which are fulfilled through the recreation experience. It is also necessary to examine recreational behaviour to assess whether, and to what extent, it is related to the cognitive and motivational processes in the hypothesized manner. Because of the scale of the project it is not possible to examine the constraints and other intervening variables which complicate these simplified processes.

The research questions are concerned with identifying the principal dimensions of perceptions, attitudes and preferences. The aim of the research is thus primarily to establish the basic concepts which people use in their perceptions of the countryside as an environment for recreation and, secondly, to assess the range of variation of these concepts and the manner in which they vary across the population. This aim is predominantly an exploratory one, in that it is concerned with the identification of basic concepts and the description of patterns of variation in cognition and behaviour. Such a research intention in turn implies that an exploratory methodology would be a suitable means of approach to answering these questions; this point will be taken up again in the methodological discussion in Chapter Eight. In the following chapter the literature on cognition and behaviour in countryside recreation will be reviewed in order to ascertain how much is known

about the answers to these questions.

Thomson (1980) has observed that the planning authorities in Britain have tended to view their role in the provision and management of recreation facilities as one of direct physical control, rather than as a more subtle process of influencing and educating people's free choice on the basis of the knowledge of how such choices are made. Although a considerable amount of research relating to recreational use of the countryside has been done in Great Britain, Glyptis (1983) has noted that this has been largely concerned with the characteristics of visitors and the use of sites (see, for instance, Elson, 1977a). The results of this research have been briefly reviewed in Chapter One as part of the discussion on patterns of participation in countryside recreation. Another major thrust of research has been concerned with whether or not people participate in countryside recreation (see, for instance, Fitton, 1978 and Sidaway, 1982a).

Theoretical research on the behavioural and cognitive aspects of recreation activity has therefore taken second place to site surveys aimed at recording levels of participation and use of provision, and to household surveys such as the National Survey of Countryside Recreation (Sidaway, 1982a) which have been concerned with establishing overall large-scale patterns and trends in countryside visiting. Attempts have been made in some of these surveys to differentiate behaviour into its constituent activities (see, for instance, Elson, 1977a, or Fitton, 1978) but these have not taken into account the full range of perceptions, attitudes and

preferences which, as the preceeding chapter has shown, are important influences on behavioural choice. The limitations of the existing data base are evident from Harrison's (1983) observation, based on the findings of a survey of recreation activities in London's Green Belt:

> "Even though the characteristics of visitors and their trip behaviour do not differ among the groups of sites surveyed the total recreation experience does."
>
> (p. 311)

The findings of the National Survey of Countryside Recreation suggest that whether or not someone visits the countryside (and consequently frequency of participation) depends upon constraints: the NSCR data (Sidaway, 1982a; Duffield, 1982) and other sources (Bacon, 1980) indicate that interest in the countryside is widespread and fairly evenly distributed among all groups in society. Now that the NSCR data provides a sound empirical base from which to approach the questions of participation in countryside recreation, there is evidence of a shift away from this 'monolithic' approach to one based on differentiation of countryside recreation into various activities, interests and market sectors (e.g., Coopers Lybrand Associates, 1979; Jowell and Finch, 1982).

The market segmentation approach (Wills, 1977; Burnham, 1977) is based on the idea of trying to understand the needs of various sectors of the market, and then tailoring provision to suit those needs. As Gray has pointed out,

> "marketing need not mean selling, which is producer orientated, but finding a genuine public need and filling it, which is client-orientated." (1980, p. 27)

The marketing approach as used for example in studies by Coopers Lybrand Associates (1979) and the Tourism and Recreation Research Unit (1980a), involves an approach which explicitly differentiates visitor activities and preferences. The influence, albeit indirect, of the need-satisfaction conceptual framework is apparent in this approach (Jowell and Finch, 1982). Since this approach is a recent one, it has not yet provided a data base for analysis and comparison of activities and preferences across a range of countryside environments.

**Perceptions and attitudes**

In a review of research in perception of countryside recreation, Elson (1979a) concluded that "much of this work is highly exploratory in nature". Methodological difficulties, small or unrepresentative samples and conflicting results indicate that no consensus of theory has yet emerged. Furthermore, Owens (1983, 1984) has argued that, in general, research has not been aimed specifically at building testable theory which could be used to explain or understand behaviour.

Veal (1973a, 1973b, 1973c, 1974) carried out a series of reviews of the perception field. Most of the studies he reviewed were North American, and he concluded that the research was of a fragmentary nature, there was a lack of an explicit link with policy formulation, and that the methodological techniques used were highly exploratory. The results of the US studies could not be directly transferred to the British context, especially as the key concept of wilderness was not really relevant to research in this country. Veal recommended that there was a need for comparative

methodological work, using a variety of techniques, to confirm the validity and compare the value of different methods; there was a need to study the underlying motivations and values of visitors to the countryside; and that the results of such research should be tied more specifically to policy formulation.

Veal's work was heavily influenced by concepts such as perceptual capacity and levels of use. One of his key assumptions was that level of use, in terms of absolute numbers, would influence site choice and satisfaction. These ideas were largely borrowed from the US literature where they were assumed to be of crucial significance. However, their relevance in the British context is questionable. In fact, the concepts of perceptual capacity, so much in vogue in the early 1970s, has not been used in any substantial research since then. The use of these assumptions in research in the early 1970s appears to be linked to the prevailing orthodoxy of that time: that visits to the countryside were increasing and that sheer numbers were the ultimate influence on both behaviour and provision.

This research did however raise some questions which are still relevant today. Veal raised such issues as: What attracts people to country parks? What should be provided in them? What role do people see country parks fulfilling? He also made a case for studying needs, and for including non-users in the research design.

Burton (1974) studied attitudes to crowding and perceptions of recreation sites using semantic differentials and checklist questions to measure perceptions of recreational environments.

Notwithstanding methodological and conceptual problems, she found no consistent variation among her respondents in terms of their perceptions of the characteristics of the rural environment. The project treated perception of crowding separately from other aspects of perception, and found that higher social and educational groups showed a "marginally greater sensitivity to crowding than other groups" (p. 147). From this evidence she concluded that the upper social groups had a lower threshold of tolerance to crowding than other occupational status groups, and this was reflected to a certain degree in observed behaviour. Burton concluded that this difference could be explained by the fact that people from more densely populated areas, typically in the inner city, chose more congested sites than suburbanites.

However, Owens (1983) has argued that Burton's methodology is subject to a number of limitations. First, Burton did not include the effects of social interaction or past experience in the research design, and both these factors clearly have a bearing on perception and behaviour. Second, the analysis is based heavily on the identification of relationships between indicator variables such as education or class, and perceptions; but since education or class cannot be considered explanatory variables, understanding of perception or behaviour is not enhanced. Causal inference cannot be made from such profile indicators because motivations, expectations and experiences are much more diverse and cannot simply be accounted for by generalised aggregate group characteristics. Furthermore, the home environment explanation suggested by Burton can be considered inadequate on the grounds that environment is

another indicator variable: it indicates what preferences are related to, but not why they arise. These observations suggest that a motivational basis for behaviour is needed: analysis must go beyond identifying relationships with aggregate group characteristics to discovering the meanings of, and predispositions towards behaviour.

Similar work by Palmer, Robinson and Thomas (1977) on the perception of countryside recreation sites, but using a household survey, attempted to analyse the structures underlying the images of different countryside places. They used unstructured and semi-structured group discussions to generate dimensions of perception of the countryside, and tested these dimensions using semantic differentials relating to elements of countryside places visited by sixty respondents. They failed to measure two dimensions adequately (relating to activities and facilities/settlement) and encountered several other methodological difficulties, but were able to group the other dimensions into three composite second-order factors. These were 'recreational enjoyment' (accessibility, crowding and emotion/reflection); 'recreation environment' (activity, scenery and a contrast factor) and evaluation. The authors suggested from this evidence that people perceive the rural environment in terms of a continuum, from highly organised places to remote places not managed for recreation. It is difficult to say, however, if this is not a construct imposed from above by the research team in their interpretation of the results or whether, because the sample was limited to a group of regular countryside

visitors from social class II, this was not due to both respondents and researchers sharing the same value system with respect to the countryside. Palmer et al. concluded that "different people like different places for the same reasons" but it could equally be argued that because of sample homogeneity 'the same sort of people like different places for the same reasons.'

This emphasis on the perceptions of specific groups is illustrated by Aitken's (1977) study of perception of 'wilderness' areas in Scotland. He found evidence (from admittedly a highly biased self-selected sample) to suggest that adoption of the concept of 'wilderness' in Great Britain was very recent, and that it was the younger users of hill and mountain areas who saw 'remoteness' and 'wildness' as perceived qualities of these areas. This suggests the diffusion of the North American concept of 'wilderness' to these shores in the last decade, and its adoption by those younger individuals open to new ideas. Aitken also found that a very high proportion (95 per cent) of his sample considered 'tourists' to be very intrusive in wilderness settings, while they perceived 'other outdoor people' as much less intrusive. Since the sample was self-selected and highly over-represented among occupational classes I and II, and among those with further education, these findings can be interpreted only as the strong and specific views held by one particular sector of the countryside recreation market.

Walker (1978), who studied another specific recreational group (boat users in the Norfolk Broads), used photographs to find out what mental image of the Broads such users built up over time. She concluded that there was a difference between males and females in

the photographs they considered typical, and that first-time visitors had a more restricted image of what was considered typical. Perception of recreational conflict varied with ownership of boat, time of year and composition of party.

The results of some of these perception studies are influenced by the stimuli used to obtain the respondents' answers; for instance, in the case of Burton's work these appeared to have quite significant effects on the results. Fitton (1978, 1979) used unstructured group discussions to elicit constructs relating to the countryside in order to avoid this problem. From this data he concluded that the countryside

> "is seen as having therapeutic value because it provides an alternative healthier, safer environment for children and adults confined in urban areas with limited open space provision. In addition for many it is seen as catering for the important needs of relaxation, getting away from it all, feeling free from responsibility, which have been pinpointed in life satisfaction research."
>
> (1978, p. 39)

While freedom, escape and relaxation thus appear to be important dimensions of perception of the countryside, Fitton also noted a considerable degree of uncertainty and lack of knowledge about the countryside, in particular with reference to knowing where to go, where access was allowed and a concern over the laws of trespass. He concluded:

> "Such views are a marked contrast to the popular image of town dwellers as potential trespassers who show little regard for country life."
>
> (1978, p. 60)

This research also produced data on perceived changes in the countryside. Of those who perceived changes for the worse, the most common concerns were conservation and pollution problems,

followed by an increase in the number of people visiting the countryside. However, an equal proportion of the sample considered changes for the better had taken place, and the provision of recreation facilities was judged to be the most important of these.

Research by Bacon (1980) similarly used group discussions to obtain data on recreational use and perception of recreational opportunities and aspirations in Greater Manchester. He found evidence that perceptions differed significantly among his respondents: some individuals, primarily inner city residents, did not perceive recreational landscapes in the traditional way (peace and quiet, scenery) and showed a preference for facilities and more organised opportunities for recreation in urban parks and other sites in the urban fringe. Finally, the National Survey of Countryside Recreation included some analysis of attitudes towards recreational use of the countryside (Sidaway, 1982a). Although this research was aimed more at attitudes towards the countryside as a whole, the results indicate that attitude appears to have some effect on the choice of recreational activity within the countryside.

The results obtained by Bacon (1980), Burton (1974) and Sidaway (1982a) thus tentatively suggest that differences in perception and attitude exist and that some people have perceptions of the countryside which involve notions of crowding, whereas others appear to prefer intensive provision. Fitton's (1978, 1979) conclusions, which indicate that the countryside is perceived as providing escape, rest, relaxation and freedom, and those of Palmer

et al. (1977), indicate that individuals do not differ greatly in their perceptions. Futhermore, existing research has provided neither a sound theoretical basis from which to approach questions of perception and attitude, nor has it succeeded in explaining why behaviour occurs (Owens, 1983).

Clearly research has not yet laid the foundations of an empirical and soundly based body of knowledge concerning how people view the countryside, what it offers, and how these perceptions differ from person to person.

**Perception research in the USA**

It is worth digressing at this point to review some research which has been undertaken in the USA on perception of the recreational environment. The results of this research have been explicitly used in policy formulation and management practice since the beginning of the 1970s and the subsequent criticism of this policy illustrates some of the methodological and ideological problems associated with research in cognition.

The pioneering study by Lucas (1964), who surveyed motorboat and canoe users in the Boundary Waters wilderness area in Minnesota and found differences between the two groups in perception and use of the area, initiated a series of research studies on wilderness recreation. The concept of carrying capacity, borrowed from ecological science, became a central focus of this research theme (e.g., Stankey, 1971; 1973 Lime and Stankey, 1971), and questionnaire surveys were used to ascertain the perceived numbers of other people wilderness visitors wished to see. The results of

this research were used as the basis for policy, to limit the numbers of people visiting wilderness areas, through the introduction of permits for access to these areas.

The results of research throughout the latter part of the 1970s, however, cast doubt on the validity of both the original findings and the resulting policy. Heberlein (1977) and Nielsen, Shelby and Haas (1977) reviewed a series of studies which showed that there was little, if any, consistent relationship between the density of users (measured as the number of people present) and perception of crowding. Lee (1977) critised the adoption of the earlier results of perception research, suggesting that those who carried out the research tended to share the same value systems as the respondents they surveyed. As a result of these shared values the methodology and the results of such research would be prone to bias because of the shared perception of what constitutes the problem and solution.

It has been argued (Manning and Ciali, 1980; West, 1981) that the relationship between attitudes and behaviour -- attitudes to crowding and actual behaviour in these situations -- is complex and should thus be used in policy making only with caution. Decisions to limit the number of users based on the assumption of a simple, direct relationship between density and crowding are thus inappropriate. Absher and Lee (1981) have suggested that rather than using socio-economic characteristics or simple numbers of visitors to explain perception of crowding, the motives of visitors will prove to be the most appropriate explanatory variables.

In a general review of these aspects of perception research, Burch

(1981) argued that, although questionnaire response may indicate dissatisfaction with crowding, perceived crowding in wilderness areas is unrelated to the number of contacts experienced. This leads him to the following conclusion:

> "the universal use of recreational carrying capacity standards may have more to do with the coinciding lines of ideology held by the manager and the researcher than by the empirical data."
>
> (p. 227)

Burch argues further that committed wilderness users, finding 'cheapened' versions of their practices available to other people, attempt to defend traditional patterns of recreation:

> "Part of the carrying capacity problem in wildland areas may occur because middle strata have regularly organised their behaviour in terms of social homogeneity rather than territory. They enter wildlands in intimate kin and peer groupings and find that the spaces of these groups are permeable to highly incompatible strangers. And faced with this situation they turn to the traditional elite solution -- use of the state's power to regulate access to certain public resources."
>
> (1981, p. 226)

The influence of values and ideology on policy and decision-making, through the guise of objective research, is clearly demonstrated here Research based on the perspective of perception, should exercise extreme caution in both the construction of the research design and the subsequent interpretation of results.

The North American research can moreover be criticised on a methodological basis. Owens (1983, 1984) has argued that these perception studies have been problem-oriented to meet specific managerial requirements with the result that a broad theoretical basis of explanation has not been developed. Owens has concluded that:

> "...the main criticism here relates to the degree which

> there has been introspection within the single framework of the quantitative approach to preference measurement...there is relatively little questioning of the fundamental assumptions which underlie this approach. Nor is there much attempt to promote alternative methods (for example participant observation and in-depth interviewing) which may seek to reveal individual motivations rather than measure aggregate preferences."
>
> (1984, p.173-4)

The lessons of this in the British context are that research should use a variety of techniques and should concentrate on understanding motivations in order to explain behaviour. Work should be directed towards developing theory in order to achieve this explanation.

**Preferences**

> "It has taken fifty years of market research to realise that you cannot ask the customers what they want and get an answer that you can use managerially...a question such as 'Would you like the Battle of Bosworth to be available for your children to play next Saturday?' is not a question they will have pondered too much...before you ask them"
>
> (Wills, 1977, p. 13)

Preferences may be determined by existing provision, by lack of knowledge or awareness of opportunities, by what is considered appropriate behaviour, or as Parker has stated:

> "people are socialised into expressing needs for particular forms of leisure activities, and in the absence of social stimuli we remain oblivious to what could be available to us."
>
> (1976, p. 144)

As a result of these considerations it is difficult to say whether, and to what extent, research on what people would like to do produces results which merely uphold the status quo, rather than reflecting the true diversity of interests and range of possibilities. For instance, when respondents are interviewed on site they may not be able to describe clearly what they would like in a hypothetical situation (the more articulate, better educated

respondents will do so more than others) Respondents may be led by what they consider to be appropriate, normative answers. The use of household rather than site surveys and the elimination of bias due to the researcher's preconceptions are two factors which may help to overcome these limitations.

In a survey of preferences for recreational provision in the Loch Lomond area, Nicholls and Young (1968) found evidence of a demand for more recreational facilities, in particular for indoor provision. Similarly, research by Duffield and Owen (1970) produced evidence from a household survey that many people appeared to prefer urban-oriented provision in the countryside. Specific 'artificial' facilities, mostly indoor, comprised half of the preferences for general outdoor recreation, and only slightly fewer than half of the choices for provision in country parks. Pitch games and similar sports facilities constituted a quarter of the total, and facilities of a 'countryside' nature comprised only 18 percent of the suggestions for general outdoor recreation provision and 25 percent of all the suggestions for such parks. As the authors concluded,

> "Only one person in four named facilities which called for location in the countryside, and even some of these, such as walks or boating facilities, could equally well be sited in an urban park....The interpretation of these data poses a dilemma. It is difficult to decide whether the preferences stated should have a marked influence on the development of the country park...It is clear however that the general public's idea of a country park differs widely from the view held by those responsible for implementing the Countryside (Scotland) Act. It seems desirable in the light of these findings that country parks should be complemented by urban based facilities. Nevertheless, facilities that could be located within a country park are in great demand, and some of them (e.g., for boating and canoeing) reflect needs that are, as yet, unsatisfied by existing provision."
>
> (Duffield and Owen, 1970, pp. 59-60)

The perceptions of, and attitudes towards, the countryside that underly these choices clearly call for further examination.

TRRU (1978a) used open-ended questions to probe features liked by country park users. Open air, freedom, scenery, natural features and walks accounted for 65 percent of the responses. However, the more frequent visitors were more likely to place greater weight on the specific facilities offered, and the presence of younger children in family groups influenced preference for informal provision (e.g., picnic sites) while the presence of older children influenced preference for sports activities and more formal provision. They also found evidence, again using open-ended questions, to suggest a demand for indoor sports facilities, a swimming pool and children's facilities in the country park: 45 per cent of the sample mentioned these facilities. One third of the sample had no suggestions to make, but of those who did suggest additional requirements, all but a few related to increased or improved facilities. Furthermore, it was predominantly young people and families with children who desired additional facilities; and these results were closely paralleled by the results of a home interview survey in the locality of the park. TRRU concluded that there appears to be a "significant gap in provision for the young" (1978a, p.89).

Surveys by TRRU (1980a, 1980b) of other urban parks and urban fringe country parks in the Glasgow area have produced similar results. The research team argue that,

> "It is important to recognise, however, that visitor motivations and perceptions are important influences on the

way the park is used and on the level of visits."
(1980b, p.45)

They found that natural features, scenery, fresh air and peace and quiet are the features of the parks most liked, and they conclude that the more urban parks are liked for the same reasons as the rural parks. This concurs with the findings of Rossman and Ulelha (1977) in the USA and Bacon (1980). Any differences between 'urban countryside' and the more remote rural areas would therefore appear to be of degree rather than kind. Preferences for additional provision were similar to those found in TRRU's (1978a) study; they found further evidence to suggest that preference for natural features and for peace and quiet increased with age, and was also greater among white collar groups, adults and those people with education beyond the statutory minimum. Unemployed people, blue collar workers, children and family groups tended to have a greater appreciation for facilities for recreation, and also stated that 'sense of freedom' was more important to them.

These findings suggest important qualitative differences in perceptions of, attitudes towards, and preferences for, the use of open space and countryside for recreation. Nevertheless, these findings are by no means conclusive: for instance, in one park respondents who were manual workers stated high preferences for peace and quiet, while in another park they clearly did not (TRRU 1980b, p. 91). Furthermore, criticisms applied to other studies are equally relevant here. While from a management point of view the search for relationships between preference and aggregate variables such as social class or life-cycle may be important, these relationships merely describe preferences, they do not

explain present or likely future behaviour. Inconsistencies in pattern of preference may be due to factors other than socio-economic characteristics. Individual differences, social norms or motivations may influence patterns of preference.

Thomson (1980), in a study of sites in London's green belt, reported similarly that peace and quiet, open space and the view were the most common reasons for liking a site. However, variations between sites were also important in determining preferences: in a further report from the same study, Harrison (1983) classified sites into three groups, suggesting that sites in one group may be substituted for each other, but not between groups. These groups were: (a) those sites used for walking, peace and quiet, open space and offering convenient access; (b) those used for a variety of pursuits; and (c) those with specific functions and attractions related to the view. Harrison concluded from the findings of this survey that there was no demand for more provision, in particular for intensive recreation facilities; a finding which contrasts with the conclusions of the Scottish studies presented above. The author also argued from the data that visitors to green belt sites were different, both in terms of social characteristics and behaviour, from visitors to other types of countryside site. This indicates that the commonly held assumption, that urban fringe and green belt sites provide a substitute for other forms of countryside, is not supported by empirical evidence:

> "the assumption that the needs of people [from the inner city] are being met by present provision in the Green Belt is untenable." (Harrison, 1983, p. 312)

Surveys by Mutch (1968), Usher, Taylor and Darlington (1970), Usher and Miller (1974) and Everett (1977) in other areas of the countryside have included questions to ascertain what people like about visiting the country. Scenery, openness and quietness were the features most liked, in a variety of nature reserves and forest environments. As pointed out earlier, the same words may be used to express totally different meanings (Clark et al., 1971; Hudson, 1980): Everett's (1977) results indicate that 'closeness to nature' (which was chosen from a pre-structured list by half of his respondents as what they liked most about the countryside) could mean anything from simply being in an open space to seeing and studying wildlife. Such biases are further indicated by the fact that 50 percent of Everett's respondents chose 'peace', 'scenery' and 'uncrowded' as things they liked about visiting the country from open-ended questions, whereas using a structured list of responses 68 percent chose 'relaxation' and 51 percent chose 'closeness to nature'.

Everett (1977) also constructed an index to measure interest in wildlife, using a series of questions relating to recreational activities, interests and membership of wildlife and related organisations. From this information he constructed a scale of 1 (low interest) to 10 (high interest); he found that less than 10 percent of the visitors to his study area (a forest area and nature reserve) were in the upper range of 5 to 10, as measured by the scale; the mean index was 2.47 and the majority of visitors scored between 1 and 3. In a further development of this work Everett (1979) related scores on the wildlife interest index to

recreational activities and socio-economic characteristics of respondents. He found that individuals with a high index value tended to belong to the professional occupational group, or were students and retired people. Scores on the index also tended to increase slightly with age and income. Apart from nature study and specific wildlife interests, photography, painting, long walks and exercising the dog were all related to a high index score; picnicking, children playing, sunbathing, sitting and relaxing (all highly popular pursuits) were all related to low index values. Of the reasons given by people for liking the countryside only 'education' scored above the mean index value; the most frequently cited reasons (relaxation, exercise, closeness to nature, get away from it all and health) all scored lower than average. Finally, those visitors who wanted additional provision of facilities had below average scores, and the area visited within the forest also varied according to the wildlife interest score. In as much as attempts to measure subjective factors such as interest in wildlife are heavily dependent on the assumption of precisely what constitutes an interest in wildlife, Everett's method appears to be heavily weighted towards a scientific or nature study definition of interest in nature and is thus limited to defining the interests, activities and characteristics of a small and very specific group of countryside visitors.

**Evidence on leisure pursuits**

Reference has already been made to the lower priority accorded to differentiating patterns of visitor behaviour. Thus, of the 37

site surveys reviewed by Elson (1977a), only half included questions on the different activities undertaken by visitors, and these questions were neither comprehensive nor exhaustive. However, Elson was able to conclude tentatively (p. 60) that social class and number of children in the party appeared to be related to the type of site visited. Those in the manual and unskilled occupational groups visited coastal sites most often and were particularly under-represented at large informal countryside sites. Groups with children appeared to show a preference for historic houses with facilities such as parks and playgrounds provided for children.

Analysis of a large scale national household survey carried out by Sillitoe (1969) showed that some relationships existed between activities and socio-economic profile variables. Visits to public open spaces (including urban parks) were differentiated by age and life-cycle positions, but not by social class. Activities were related to both life-style and gender; women were more likely to cite social factors as the most important reasons for participation in leisure pursuits. Some of the relationships found by Sillitoe (particularly those involving social class and also car ownership) may be explained by the operation of constraint factors. However, the analysis relating activity groups to aggregate social characteristics suffers from the limitations discussed in other similar studies: socio-economic variables do not explain behaviour.

Veal (1976) carried out a similar analysis of data from another national household survey. His results showed strong relationships between a number of socio-demographic variables and participation

in countryside recreation: higher income, social class, car ownership and education were all positively related to increased participation. This work was carried out however with the aim of forecasting future levels of participation from the socio-demographic characteristics of present participation and thus still grounded in the perspectives of mass use and mass provision.

The variables involved related to frequency of participation rather than absolute interest in a particular activity. Frequency of participation is largely determined by socio-economic constraints, as Roberts (1979) has shown; those without cars or in the lower income groups are still likely to participate in the same activities, only less frequently. Therefore these findings do not explain the determinants of recreational motivation, satisfaction or preference, only the constraints upon actual behaviour.

In a further analysis of this data, Veal (1979) attempted to identify groups of people with similar interests. The reasons for this analysis were twofold: a desire to forecast future levels of activity, and a concern with social equity. The former approach was based on the assumption that if participation in one activity increases then other related activities will also experience greater popularity, an assumption which still reflected the preoccupation wiith growth of the early 1970s. The second aim however was grounded in the more recent concern for those who do not visit the countryside regularly, and was intended to identify under-privileged groups with low rates of participation. However, the variables involved were still based on participation rates, and

thus suffer from the limitations noted above.

These results identified two seperate groups of active pursuits. One involved camping and walking, the other included visits to countryside, seaside, zoos, fairs and parks and participation in sports such as tennis and swimming. These findings suggest that the simple active/passive division is not appropriate and that life-style groups and leisure activities other than simple countryside visiting should be taken into account when attempting to group similar outdoor leisure pursuits.

Fitton (1978, 1979) found from the data from the NSCR that only 4 percent of the population participated in active sports in the country, while 35 percent went on drives and picnics, 20 percent on long walks, 15 percent visited the sea coast and 13 percent visited historic buildings. These activities together made a total of 83 percent involved in 'passive' activities -- what is commonly known as informal countryside recreation. The data further suggested that informal recreation participation was split fairly evenly between places not managed for recreation and managed or organised sites (although the latter included villages and pubs). The NSCR data also gave some tentative indication that visit to type of site varies with occupational status: manual workers were slightly more likely to visit country pubs and safari parks, but this difference was not strongly marked. The use of aggregate profile analysis and participation rates however tells us more about constraints on behaviour than about motivations. There was also evidence that some individuals desired increased provision, motivated apparently by a desire to reduce use of the countryside by others.

Nicholls and Young (1968), in their study of the Loch Lomond area, found that the presence of children in the party influenced the choice of activity, but no differences were found according to social class or education. In a study of the recreational use of a large country park, TRRU (1978a) found evidence of differences in behaviour among different groups of visitors. Those who completed full time education earlier and those from the lower occupational status groups were over-represented in participation in informal games, and were under-represented in sports activities. Families with children tended to take part in different activities depending on the ages of the children. TRRU concluded that

> "park users cannot be considered as a homogenous group with common interests and aspirations: rather they are an agglomeration of distinctive sub-groups."
>
> (1978a, pp 60-61)

This is an important finding particularly from a management point of view; however it only describes behaviour and thus merely provides the starting point for explanation and understanding.

Similar results, indicating that visitors to different places in the countryside differ significantly in some respects, have been obtained by other researchers. Bayfield and Barrow (1976) found that visitors at nature trails, particularly those who walked the trails, were slightly more likely to be in white collar occupations than visitors at other countryside attractions, and visitors to a forest area who had nature study interests were found to be mostly in the professional occupational group (Everett, 1979). TRRU (1978b) found that upper income and upper social status groups had higher levels of participation in all activities, except for visits

to the beach, in which lower occupational groups were over-represented. The higher social groups were also slightly more likely to visit woodland sites. These results may be explained by the operation of constraint factors on behaviour; a finding emphasised by the use of participation rates as dependent variables.

TRRU (1980a), in a study of four urban fringe and rural parks, found a relationship between age and recreation activities. Younger visitors tended to take part in more active pursuits, while older people participated more in passive pursuits such as viewing scenery and sitting in or by the car. Walking and informal games were most popular among family groups, the latter particularly among families with younger children. Higher social groups were over-represented among those taking part in active sports, but spectating, viewing scenery and walking were equally spread among all social groups. Those with higher education and from white collar occupations were more likely to visit a historic house (TRRU, 1980b). From this evidence it appears that there are distinctive sub-groups among visitors to the countryside, in terms of activities. Thompson (1980) obtained results broadly similar to those of TRRU (1980a) for sites in the urban fringe of London, although he also found that differences in recreational pursuits were related to the type of site visited. These findings again may be explained by the operation of constraint factors, whether economic, social, life-cycle or environmental. However, the identification and description of different market sectors does not allow understanding of the meaning of different behaviours, or of

the reasons why and how those behaviours arise. The motivation underlying behaviour and the links with cognition need to be established before the processes which influence behaviour can be fully understood.

Two studies of particular interest used multivariate methods to classify recreational activities undertaken in the countryside. Using socio-economic profiles and participation in two or more activities as clustering criteria, TRRU (1977) concluded that there was little evidence for deducing the existence of distinct passive activity packages, but there was a definite difference between general socio-economic characteristics of those taking part in active pursuits and those taking part in passive pursuits. Active participants tended to be younger, belonged to the upper occupational status groups, had higher incomes, higher levels of car ownership and education and tended to be still in education or married with older children. Glyptis (1981), using data from a site survey, was however able to differentiate clusters of passive activities. She found that picnicking, walking, sunbathing and informal games clustered together, while sunbathing combined with all these activities and with sitting in the car.

The TRRU study illustrates the limitations of more sophisticated analysis based on the same assumptions as the other studies discussed here. The greater complexity of the technique involved does not make up for the fact that socio-economic characteristics do not explain the differences in participation. Glyptis, however, related lifestyles rather than social characteristics to activity

packages. Whereas the existence of a relationship does not provide an explanation, the move away from use of socio-economic characteristics, and the use of a more diverse range of influences as independent variables does indicate a trend towards perhaps more fruitful ground.

**Conclusion**

Five main conclusions may be drawn from this review. The first, and most significant is the lack of development of theory in the study of perceptions, attitudes, preferences and behaviour. Studies have either been aimed at specific management problems or have simply eschewed theoretical questions. Very few studies have explicitly attempted to test hypotheses in order to establish a theoretical basis upon which future research may build. This lack of theory is reflected in the inconsistency of many results, and the inadequacy of existing explanations of behaviour.

Secondly, most existing attempts at analysis have attempted to relate socio-economic characteristics to cognition and behaviour. Such relationships have often been, implicitly or explicitly, postulated as explaining differences in the dependent variables. However, since a relationship does not necessarily imply causality, such explanations are clearly lacking. Although, in a management context, the identification of sub-groups with particular socio-economic characteristics may make the targetting of certain facilities easier, the existence of such relationships does not enhance understanding. It merely provides a starting point for further analysis of cognition and behaviour and the diverse ways in which these phenomena inter-relate. Furthermore, the emphasis on

such profile analyses has led to a concern with constraint factors in relation to behaviour.. This concern has been reflected in policy attempts to lift these constraints in order to facilitate participation among deprived groups, as discussed in Chapter Four.

Thirdly, there is a degree of confusion in the use of terms such as perception, attitude, preference and motivation. This confusion may be related to the lack of theoretical basis of much research and the consequent interchangeability of terms and concepts.

Fourthly, there has been a lack of interest in the social context of recreation. Research has largely ignored both the interactions within the immediate social group and also between different groups in a recreational context. The effects of social context in these situations must clearly have a significant influence on behaviour. However, such influences will not adequately be measured by traditional questionnaire survey methods, even those involving psychometric questions.

This point leads to the final one, that research methods have largely been confined to the standard questionnaire approach. Alternative methods, such as participant observation or in-depth interviewing have rarely been used (although Glyptis (1981), Fitton (1978) and Bacon (1980) have been noticeable exceptions).

The research findings discussed in the review may however be drawn together here. Attempts to differentiate recreational activity into different groups or packages have produced conflicting results, while little is known about the antecedents of behaviour. The

paucity of research on the perception of the countryside, whether in general or specifically as a recreation environment, means that little may be concluded from existing evidence other than broad and tentative generalisations. Some of this work appears to be influenced by the existence of commonsense ideas and received wisdoms about the countryside and may therefore be of limited relevance. Some research (Duffield and Owen, 1970; TRRU, 1978a; 1980a; Bacon, 1980) has produced evidence indicating the existence of a demand among some sections of the public for more facility-oriented provision, while other studies (Fitton, 1978; 1979; Harrison, 1983) have produced evidence which does not support such a conclusion. These conflicting findings require that the motivations and attitudes underlying individual preferences are examined in greater detail.

There is virtually no empirical work in Great Britain using the concept of need; while reasons for liking the countryside appear to be established with some degree of certainty, there is insufficient evidence to suggest whether these reasons differ from person to person and how these reasons may be related to other aspects of cognition and behaviour. There is tentative evidence to suggest that tolerance to degree of recreational use varies with social class although the differences between high and low tolerance groups are not great. There is little evidence relating to people's attitudes to the countryside as a recreational environment.

Taken together, the evidence examined in this review clearly leads to the conclusion that little is known at present about the overall

image and meaning of the countryside as a recreational environment, how this varies from person to person and how these aspects of cognition are related to motivation and behaviour. The research questions presented at the beginning of this chapter are concerned with establishing the nature of perceptions, attitudes, preferences and reasons for liking the countryside, together with the degree of variation of these variables and the relationships between them. It has already been noted that the nature of these questions implies an exploratory research strategy to identify the basic concepts involved and the patterns of variation of these variables. In the next chapter the methodological considerations involved in this approach to the solution of these questions will be examined.

# 8: Methodology.

> "Science: the process of substituting unimportant questions which can be answered for important questions which cannot."
> (Kenneth Boulding, The Image, 1956)

The recent methodological and philosophical debates which have characterised the social sciences in general and geography in particular (Gregory, 1978; Johnston, 1979; 1980) demonstrate that Boulding's rather cynical definition of science contains more truth than has generally been accepted. One result of these debates has been the realisation that philosophy and ideology are crucial influences on the process of research, and the purpose of this chapter is to examine these critically in relation to the questions raised in the previous chapter and to specify an appropriate methodology for the solution of these problems.

## Methodological assumptions

The substance of the recent methodological and philosophical debates has centred on the assumptions and limitations of the scientific method, as espoused in the philosophy of logical positivism. There are a number of points which are of particular relevance to this research project and these are briefly discussed below.

First, by allowing only the existence of observable knowledge, positivist approaches deny metaphysical elements of knowledge: Sayer (1979) has argued that, for this reason, the traditional geographical question of the 'man/nature' relationship was ignored by the quantitative paradigm of the 1960s and 1970s. Research on

attitudes and values during this period has been largely grounded in the humanistic perspective, as the work of geographers such as Lowenthal and Tuan demonstrates. This research project is specifically concerned with attitudes and values, and with the relationship of people with their environment.

Secondly, the positivist approach attempts to create a false sense of objectivity by removing the observer from the observed, whereas in social situations the observer and the subject of enquiry are both part of a continuing social process of interaction (Gregory, 1978) and part of the same social structure about which they may share the same definitions and commonsense ideas (Sayer, 1979). The subject matter of this research is concerned with access to resources, a question which, in the final analysis, is a political one. The allocation and distribution of power and resources is not a subject which can be approached from a neutral position.

Thirdly, the assumptions of positive science are concerned with the development of general laws which will allow prediction and thus ultimately control, in this case, of the social system (Bennet and Wrigley, 1981). This approach is thus descriptive of existing behaviour and the status quo. Finally, it allows no consideration of the values, norms and goals by which the system is, or should be, organised (Sayer, 1979; 1981).

These points are particularly crucial since the values and assumptions held by those involved in research practice in the social sciences are bound to influence unconsciously the choice of subject to study, the choice of methodology, the consequent

research design and the interpretation of results, despite rigorous attempts to exclude 'subjectivity' from the data and analysis. These criticisms are particularly relevant to this project as it is concerned specifically with value judgments and opinions: the design of research and interpretation of results may be influenced by notions of what 'ought' to be the case. The application of 'hard' science to 'soft' data must acknowledge the assumptions regarding method and subject matter on which the methodology is based.

These limitations of the positivist approach have brought about a revival of interest in phenomenological and humanistic perspectives and qualitative methodology in the social sciences (Ley, 1981). The advantages of these qualitative approaches, that they emphasise understanding rather than the measurement and statistical 'explanation' of positive methods, are counterbalanced by the lack of criteria for choosing between different versions of the subjective 'truth' (Sayer, 1981). The dialogue between these two points of view has developed into a latter day 'qualitative/quantitative' debate.

The solution preferred by most researchers has been termed 'neo-positivism' or 'critical science' (Gregory, 1978): a stance where the assumptions of positivism are relaxed, and values and goals are acknowledged in their influence on objectivity. As Pocock and Hudson have stated,

> "Adoption of this neo-positivist position implies a recognition that current theories and modes of knowing influence empirical observation and the delimitation of the bounds of permissible subject matter."
>
> (1978, p. 15)

It is possible to go a step further than this. As Brenner (1981) and Couclelis and Golledge (1983) argue, it is not so much a question of replacing one paradigm with another, as of using different methodologies interchangeably to cope with the particular limitations

of each:

> "In this view, the quantitative vs. qualitative methodology debate is somewhat mistaken, not only because any method will lead to bias, but in particular as it is clearly the abuse of traditional methods, not their character as forms of data collection per se which has discredited the employment of these methods."
>
> (Brenner, 1981, p. 150)

On the basis of the contention, noted above, that "any method will lead to bias", the appropriate approach is to use a combination of methods to cancel out biases (Brenner, 1981; Stockdale and Eldred, 1982). This kind of 'multi-operationalism' (see, for example, Hale and Stockdale, 1982) integrates both qualitative and quantitative methods, and utilises the advantages of different measurement techniques while minimising or making apparent biases and limitations (Couclelis and Golledge, 1983). It is therefore intended to use both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis in this project.

**Models of man and society**

As Agnew and Duncan (1981) have pointed out, few research projects explicitly set out the models of man and society on which they are based, yet these models, in the sense of being assumptions on which the research is grounded, undoubtedly influence the choice of theoretical framework, methodology and interpretation of results. Moore and Golledge (1976) have reviewed the conceptual bases of

human behaviour and have distinguished three models. In the nativistic model, behaviour is the result of purely internal factors and is thus unique to each individual. In this case regularities in behaviour cannot occur other than by coincidence. The stimulus-response model, on the other hand, assumes that all behaviour can be explained in the form of direct response to stimuli. This model has been extensively criticised as being mechanistic and for not taking into account the complexity of behaviour and the social processes which mediate between stimulus and behaviour (Koroscil, 1971; Gold, 1980). The third model is an attempt to avoid the extreme positions of the previous two. It is the interactionalist or transactionalist position, which conceives of the individual interacting with the environment and constructing an 'image' based on available information from these transactions. Behaviour occurs on the basis of the information obtained (Patricios, 1978). This model can be extended to take into account behaviour that is learned in a social situation, since learning is a cognitive process. The influence of social relations and interactions within both learning and behaviour situations can thus be incorporated within the transactionalist framework, and the present research is explicitly set in such a framework.

It may be argued that society is more than the sum of the individuals who make up the social world. As Sayer states,

> "the 'social' is not reducible without residue to the characteristics of the present individual members of society."
>
> (1979, p. 22)

Therefore a model to explain the nature of society is also

necessary, over and above the origins of individual behaviour. An appropriate model here is the structural one (Agnew and Duncan, 1981) wherein the structure of society is responsible to a considerable degree for behaviour patterns. The structure of society is taken to be the organisations and institutions which, because of their relative power, enforce constraints on individual behaviour, together with the more abstract social and political entities which fulfil the same role (e.g., norms, ideologies and legal frameworks). The justification for the choice of this model is that it explicitly takes into account constraints on behaviour, and indeed its adoption is advocated by Johnston (1980) for this particular reason. A neo-positivist behavioural perspective, grounded in a structural framework, therefore underlies the methodology adopted here. The relevance of this approach lies in the fact that it can overcome limitations of cognitive and behavioural approaches alone:

> "questions raised within one paradigm -- that of individual behaviour as a function of preference and choice -- cannot be answered from within that paradigm but, of necessity, must be approached from the perspective of another, which has at its core a structural analysis. This is not to deny the validity and importance of studies of environmental images but rather to suggest that, in order to explain what they descibe, another frame of reference is required."
>
> (Hudson, 1980, p. 356)

**Specific methodological problems**

The review in Chapter Seven indicated that existing studies of cognition and behaviour suffered certain shortcomings, which resulted largely from the methodologies employed. These shortcomings related to all aspects of research design, from sample choice and data collection methods to the choice of variables and

methods of analysis used. Therefore, the selection of appropriate methodological techniques must explicitly take into account these specific methodological problems.

**Choice/Constraint**

The question of what people want to do in terms of countryside recreation is a problem of human behaviour. The study of human behaviour may be approached from two perspectives: those of choice or constraint (Thrift, 1981). Research from the perspective of cognition (i.e., based on the assumption that behaviour is a function of individual choice) has been criticised because of its lack of relevance in situations of constraint which occur more frequently in everyday life (Rieser, 1977; Lipman and Harris, 1980). Thrift has argued that most behavioural situations will comprise a balance between these two extremes, although certain situations will lend themselves more to one or the other determinant.

The work of the Countryside Commission with the data from the National Survey of Countryside Recreation (Fitton, 1978; 1979; Sidaway, 1982a and Duffield, 1982) suggests that participation in countryside recreation is largely a matter of constraint. Factors such as leisure time, money, health and family considerations, and above all ownership of a private car, facilitate participation. However, it may be argued that what people do in the countryside is in greater part a matter of choice: it is largely a question of behaviour once constraints have been lifted. As Sidaway has put it,

"The influence of car ownership pervades all avenues of the

> analysis, other material factors (income and occupation) constrain the ability to participate, but in the range and extent of activity (what people do in the countryside) subtler influences begin to play a part."
>
> (1982a, p. 16)

Of course, constraint may operate here too: the choice of destination or activity may be influenced by lack of knowledge, composition of the party, social context and, as was argued earlier, the values and images which shape behaviour and the supply of facilities. Therefore a continuum along the choice/constraint dichotomy is proposed (Thrift, 1981) and it is contended that behaviour in countryside recreation is determined partly by choice and partly by constraint. However, it is also contended that a greater aspect of choice is involved because the study is concerned with what people do when they visit the countryside, that is, once constraints on visiting have been lifted; hence the conceptualisation of behaviour as a result of cognition in Chapter Six and the resulting choice-based methodology. Those who cannot participate are to be included in the research design, in terms of the expression of latent demand but the problem of how to facilitate their participation is beyond the immediate scope of the project.

**Development of theory**

The theoretical shortcomings of much existing research indicate that the methodology employed in this study should address explicitly the development of theory. The review of the literature emphasised the lack of explanation achieved by research into the cognitive aspects of recreation, a point strongly made by Owens (1983; 1984). The largely descriptive approach of most of the

studies reviewed in Chapter Seven must be eschewed in favour of a research design which can provide an understanding of the causes of behaviour. Such an understanding will best be obtained from a theory which accounts successfully for the nature of, and variation in, recreational cognition and behaviour.

The lack of explanation has resulted from, among other factors, an emphasis on descriptive, case study approaches, aimed at specific sites and their particular management problems. Clearly, there is a need for research to be directed at the general rather than the particular. Consequently, there is a need to study theoretically determined samples of the population at large, rather than managerially defined client groups.

Development of theory normally involves the testing of hypotheses. However, research questions outlined in Chapter Five are largely exploratory. But an exploratory approach need not imply a purely descriptive and atheoretical outcome to the research: a suitable grounding for theory must be identified and established. The basic concepts involved in the process of recreational choice need to be explored in order to understand the nature and origins of behaviour. Furthermore, the role of these concepts in the process of behavioural choice requires clarification.

The choice of variables is also of paramount importance. The whole range of cognitive variables outlined in the theoretical framework presented in Chapter Six should be examined. Moreover, the use of these variables should be explicitly related to that theoretical framework. It was observed in Chapter Seven that there was a

particular need to study motivation and satisfaction in order to understand more clearly the determinants of behaviour. It was also noted that these concepts have proved difficult to operationalise and therefore have not been used to any great extent in research. However, a solution to some of these difficulties was found by Haworth (1982) in his use of satisfaction statements. This approach appears to be a promising one, although satisfaction (the end result of the theoretical process outlined in Chapter Six) is really used as a surrogate for motivation, which is the initial impetus to action.

The development of theory also requires the use of appropriate experimental design. The concern of past research with description is related partly to the use of techniques which established or measured relationships with other descriptive variables (although these were often termed 'explanatory' variables). Consequently, there is a need for analysis to take into account relationships between cognitive variables and also between these and behavioural variables.

**Methods of data collection**

The discussion in Chapter Six and the review in Chapter Seven both highlighted the importance of social influences on recreational behaviour, although it was also noted that this factor had not been explored in the majority of studies. The result of this omission has been an emphasis on individual perceptions and behaviour, seen in a social vacuum. The influence of social groups, such as the family, the peer group, the clientele at a particular site, or larger scale status and lifestyle groups, on behaviour should

therefore be taken into account in the methodology.

A number of differing approaches may be used to achieve this aim. The research design may concentrate on one particular type of social group, whether family or at a larger scale, and seek to demonstrate the links between social group variables and cognition/behaviour. Alternatively, a study may be targeted at several sub-samples each containing respondents from a particular social group; analysis would aim to test hypotheses concerning between group differences. Both these approaches involve the use of sample design to enable study of relationships between social group variables and cognition/behaviour variables.

Since recreation is predominantly a group activity, whether family, peer group or other group, it is likely to involve trade-offs between group members. Such trade-offs are likely to result in behaviour which may not necessarily conform with individual cognitions elicited at a later date in a questionnaire study. This situation can be resolved either by careful questionnaire design, having regard to the relevant social group variables, or perhaps alternatively by total household interviewing. The latter approach involves analysis of the differences in response between the various members of the social group in question - it can of course be extended beyond the household to involve other groups which participate together. Techniques of participant observation, which have been used in some recreation studies (e.g. Glyptis, 1981), also offer scope for fruitful research in this context; analysis in this case would be aimed at first describing behaviour patterns,

then establishing the existence of relationships between observed behaviour and social and or cognitive variables.

A further problem specific to research in this field is highlighted by Walker's (1981) work. She found evidence to support the hypothesis originally put forward by Clawson and Knetsch (1966), that cognition varies over time. Clawson and Knetsch originally classified the recreation experience into five periods: anticipation, travel to the site, on-site experience, travel from the site and recollection. Walker's evidence showed that anticipation, on-site experience and recollection each produced different images of the recreation experience. This finding has obvious implications for a posterion surveys. The use of respondent chasing methods is therefore necessary to collect data from the different phases of the recreation experience. This approach involves maintaining contact with each respondent over a period of time, and carrying out extensive interviews before, during and after the particular recreation activity.

There is evidence that there is sometimes a discrepancy between what people say they do and what they actually do. This was discussed in detail in Chapter Seven especially in relation to questionnaire response and actual behaviour in perception research in the USA. The inclusion in the research design of observational methods of data collection as a solution to this problem is therefore required.

Given the wide variety of meanings inherent in any social situation or physical environment, the same words used by different

individuals may have different meanings (Hudson, 1980); this is the problem of relative perception discussed in Chapter Six. Different means may be used to attain the same goals, the same activities may be undertaken for different reasons or widely differing activities may be pursued for similar reasons, if motivation and satisfaction are used to explain recreation activity. A successful methodology must therefore be able to differentiate between these perceptions of reality; this aim may be achieved by either the employment of observational techniques or by careful questionnaire design.

Finally there are the numerous sources of bias inherent in the application of any measurement technique. In the case of survey research, results will be affected by the following: lack of response, articulateness of respondents, recall of information, co-operation of respondents, questionnaire bias and nature of the interview. Various techniques produce their own bias. Closed questions will limit the respondent to specific ideas and concepts, while possibly influencing him or her by the content or wording of questions and other stimuli. Open-ended questions, particularly in-depth interviewing, are prone to bias by the interviewer, and subsequent analysis and classification of results may be influenced by preconceived ideas. Furthermore, respondents may not know, or be aware of, options, or may not think of all the alternatives during an interview. Many of the more complex techniques used for eliciting perceptions and images are biased by educationally acquired abilities and skills (Canter, Brown and Richardson, 1976; Pocock and Hudson, 1978; Gold, 1980). The process of collecting

data itself involves social interaction and is not neutral (Brenner, 1981). The respondent may not understand, be aware of or be interested in the subject of enquiry, or some respondents may ascribe more importance and hence devote more attention to the interview (Stockdale and Eldred, 1982). The interview itself may produce expectations of certain responses, and response may be subtly influenced where the researcher or the interviewer holds assumptions which are shared by some of the respondents but not by others. In conclusion, these points, together with the factors outlined above should all be taken into account in the research design.

# 9: Questionnaire Design

The multi-operational approach outlined in the previous chapter, based on a combination of different methodological paradigms and data collection techniques, appears to be the best way to minimise bias in the research design. However, it is difficult to include every factor in the design of an experiment, and for a variety of reasons certain of these methodological considerations discussed in Chapter Eight were not adopted in the design of the study. The questions which the research is intended to answer relate to four areas of enquiry:

(i) perceived attributes of the countryside environment

(ii) attitudes to recreational use of the countryside

(iii) benefits or satisfactions gained from recreation

(iv) recreational behaviour: activities and places visited

The aims in each case are to identify the basic concepts which describe the recreation experience, to establish the degree to which these concepts vary across the population and to determine whether any pattern exists with respect to such variation.

## Qualitative methods

A qualitative approach using in-depth unstructured interviews (for instance, as used by Fitton (1979) or Bacon (1980)) is an appropriate means of collecting data on respondents' perceptions (i), attitudes (ii) and satisfactions (iii). The main advantage of this approach is that it avoids, or at least minimises the prestructuring imposed on the respondents' views by a relatively

more complex method of data collection which uses stimuli that may bias the response. This approach is also appropriate to (iv), the question relating to behaviour in the countryside. Secondly, the use of preliminary in-depth interviews allows qualitative data to be collected on the basic concepts used by respondents. This information can then be used to design the final questionnaire, to ensure the questions are relevant to the respondents and the wording accurately reflects everyday experience. Finally, a qualitative approach allows individual differences in perception, motivation and behaviour to emerge, as opposed to the aggregate results of quantitative approaches.

**Quantitative methods: (a) Activities and places visited**

The research questions are dealt with here in the order in which they were presented in the final questionnaire. A structured approach is relevant for question (iv), in the form of a checklist of all possible types of location that may be visited in the countryside and of all possible types of activity. Questions involving checklists have been widely used in social research, for example, see Burgess (1974) and Weigel and Weigel (1978). The justification for the use of a checklist method is that it allows the presentation of a wide range of possible options from which the respondent may choose.

The nature of the response depends on the specific variable to be measured: Roberts (1979) has shown that upper income groups tend to participate less frequently in a wider range of leisure activities, while lower income groups devote proportionately more time to fewer

pursuits. Measures of frequency, absolute participation or number of activities undertaken are therefore likely to produce different results.

In this case, since the aim is to define typical groups of clients, or market segments, for different types of countryside activity or location, it appears most appropriate to identify the typical range of activities or locations visited for each respondent. It was thus decided to ask respondents to indicate all the activities they 'usually' did, and all the places they 'usually' visited on trips to the countryside. For those respondents who visited the countryside only rarely (i.e., once a year or less) 'usual' activities and places visited were taken as all places visited and all activities undertaken in the past year. Furthermore, respondents were asked to indicate five places and five activities which they most enjoyed. It was considered that these instructions would be most likely to produce data on typical behaviour of visitors to the countryside.

The checklist of types of place and activities (Table 9.1) was constructed with the aim of providing a range of all possible types of location for countryside recreation and of all recreational activities in the countryside, excluding those of a minority nature. A 'minority' activity would be considered as one which attracts participation of the order of approximately 3 percent (or less) of the population. This is based on Fitton's (1978) findings: in the data he presented on participation in countryside recreation, the smallest group of activities constituted 'active sports', with a participation rate of 4 percent.

The list reflects the type of provision which currently exists and hence the kinds of recreational activities which are most popular. It was derived from the results of the qualitative research, from other surveys and from consideration of the range of possible destinations of countryside trips. One consideration was to include a sufficient range of places and activities which

Table 9.1 Checklist of countryside recreation activities

Places to visit

1. Country villages
2. Nature reserves
3. Country pubs
4. Stately homes
5. Parklands and gardens
6. Places of historic interest (castles,monuments,historic buildings)
7. Sporting events in the country
8. Country parks
9. Nature trails
10. Fairs, markets and similar country events
11. Wildlife and safari parks
12. A farm
13. The beach (not at sea-side resort)
14. Open country (hills, moorland etc)

Activities

1. Visit friends or relatives in the country
2. Picnicking
3. Cycling
4. Watch live sports in the countryside
5. Take part in sports (e.g. canoeing, skiing or sailing)
6. Go for a short walk (less than two miles)
7. Go for a long walk (over two miles)
8. Relax and do nothing
9. Play informal games (e.g., ball games, model boats and planes, kite flying)
10. Fishing
11. Camping
12. Nature study/birdwatching
13. Boating/boat trips
14. Visit teashops, restaurants etc. in country
15. Horse riding/pony trekking

represented 'intensive' recreational use, involving built or 'artificial' facilities in a country environment. Examples of this type of location are country shows, fairs, markets, traction engine rallies and similar events. It was felt that this aspect of countryside recreation has not been given the same emphasis as 'natural' countryside, because of emphases in site surveys on 'natural' sites. Obviously, this list does not capture all the possible subtle variations of the countryside experience, in terms of the crucial differences in clientele, meanings and expectations ascribed to different places, the social influences on behaviour and the relative satisfactions derived from different activities. The list is, however, adequate as a representation of the facilities available in the countryside and of the most popular activities which are possible in a rural environment. The checklist was intended to measure the relative popularity of each item and to allow the grouping of individuals and items according to similarity in behaviour.

It was indicated in Chapter Eight that the use of participant observation techniques was required to provide an adequate description of behaviour. However, it was decided not to use observation techniques in the design of the research, and instead concentrate the study on aspects of cognition. The validity of this approach, and of the methods used would be assessed by the results produced.

**(b) Perceived benefits or satisfactions**

Parts (i) to (iii) of the research question are more complex as

they relate to several different elements of perception. Part (ii) will be dealt with first: this relates to perceived need and satisfaction. The measurement of need is a complex matter (DART/IFER, 1976; Dower et al., 1980); in this study it was felt that the question should be aimed at the satisfaction of needs, that is, at the perceived satisfactions or benefits which are gained from recreation in the countryside. This decision is based on the conceptual framework of need (DART/IFER, 1976), which was discussed in Chapter Six: individuals are seen as seeking participation in activities which provide experiences which satisfy their needs. A structured checklist was also used

Table 9.2 Perceived benefits from visiting the countryside

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. | Relaxation |
| 2. | Peace and quiet |
| 3. | It's nicer in the country than in the city |
| 4. | It's something I can do with friends |
| 5. | Fresh air |
| 6. | The sense of freedom |
| 7. | To unwind and find the time to think about things |
| 8. | To be with the family |
| 9. | The open spaces |
| 10. | It's a chance to develop skills and interests |
| 11. | To recover from the pressures of work |
| 12. | A chance to see wildlife |
| 13. | It's somewhere the children can play freely |
| 14. | I enjoy driving in the country |
| 15. | Learning about nature and the countryside |
| 16. | The scenery |
| 17. | It's a chance to meet other people and make friends |
| 18. | Exercise |
| 19. | To get out of the city |

here and respondents were asked to indicate up to six of nineteen reasons (Table 9.2) which contributed to their enjoyment of visits to the country.

The items in this checklist are based on the results of the in-depth interviews, and on the results of other surveys, particularly TRRU (1980a), but were structured according to Maslow's (1954) classification of needs to ensure that all relevant needs were included and that an approximately equal number of items represented each category of need. Thus, exercise, relaxation and 'get out of the city' are physical or mental needs, relating to health. Maslow's second order need, security, (whether physical or financial) does not appear to be related to countryside recreation. Social needs are represented by items 4, 8, 13 and 17, dealing with family and friendship needs. Fourth order needs, for esteem and recognition, again do not appear to play an important role in countryside recreation, although item 10 may be construed as indirectly tapping this need.

The highest order needs, for knowledge, aesthetics and self-actualisation, are represented by items 10, 12, 15 and 16. The other items are less clearly related to Maslow's classification, but they are included as they are among the most popular reasons given in other surveys. Although these latter items cannot be directly conceptualised as satisfying specific needs, they are clearly benefits obtained from visiting the country. As in the previous case the checklist method was used to provide a wide range of possible benefits and the aim was to measure the relative popularity of each benefit and identify any group of reasons which might cluster together for particular respondents. Respondents were also asked to rank their six choices, as a further refinement of the measure.

**(c) Measurement of belief and attitude**

The use of both more and less structured techniques is appropriate here, in addition to the wholly unstructured accounts obtained from in-depth interviews. The stimuli used in highly structured techniques can yield valuable information on the evaluation of certain aspects of the recreational environment. However, the use of such structured techniques presupposes certain beliefs since it is assumed that the respondent accepts the stimuli as relevant. An unstructured technique which does not rely heavily upon pre-ordained stimuli should therefore also be used.

**Attitudes**

An attitude scale (Torgerson, 1962; Nunnally, 1967) was chosen as a structured method of measuring attitudes. Scaling is a long established form of attitude measurement; it allows the strength and direction of an attitude to be determined. The results of many studies have shown it to be widely applicable and have resolved the major problems in the use of the technique (Nunnally, 1967). The concepts which make up the scale are supplied by the researcher and the respondent is asked to state whether he or she agrees or disagrees with each item, using a five point scale. The use of a large number of items increases the probability that anomalous or random responses will cancel out, and respondents who rate similar items consistently may be considered to hold a particular attitude with respect to those items. The scale can be considered to be additive in that each item taps the same dimension of attitude. All the items must therefore relate to this one dimension: items that cannot be compared cannot be scaled. Scores can then be

computed for each respondent, showing the strength and direction of the attitude, by adding the scores for all items. However, since the same scores may nevertheless have different meanings, this extension of the technique should be used with caution.

The major problems with attitude scaling relate to validity and reliability (Nunnally, 1967). The former reflects the success of the scale in measuring the specific attitude as originally intended by the researcher. The latter concerns whether the scale consistently measures the attitude in question, i.e., whether the results may be replicated with other samples.

**Validity**

It was decided to use a structured technique (attitude scaling) to evaluate the basic concepts of the 'traditional ideology' of countryside recreation, which were based on from the literature survey in Chapter Two, and an unstructured technique (to be discussed below) to assess the validity of these concepts. The reasoning for this decision is as follows. Validity can be tested only by the use of different techniques of measurement, requiring replication of the study or parallel surveys (for example, see Rosenthal, Wildman and Driver, 1982). Therefore an unstructured technique of attitude measurement (to be discussed below) will allow validity to be tested, in that the constructs elicited from respondents in an unstructured way can be used to validate the concepts which comprise the attitude scale. Comparison of the two sets of responses will thus allow inferences to be made about the relative advantages of the measurement techniques as well as

whether the constructs being measured actually exist.

It will be recalled from the discussion in Chapter Two that the two basic concepts inherent in the 'traditional ideology' are: a) the necessity of solitude for the appropriate interaction with nature (and consequently the disfavour of 'gregarious' use of the countryside); and b) the necessity for direct contact with nature and the natural environment without the medium of artificial or mechanical facilities, and hence appreciation of purely natural values. The scale was therefore designed explicitly with the aim of measuring the evaluation of these two concepts. It is acknowledged that the decision to use these concepts as the pre-structured basis of the attitude scale clearly involves the assumption that these concepts exist and are held by the whole sample. This assumption will be reviewed later in the light of the results. There is, however, a certain amount of evidence in support of this assumption.

Duffield and Owen (1970) and TRRU (1980a) present evidence which implies the existence of attitudes to the use of country parks in the urban fringe which could be structured along precisely such a dimension, from the specific appreciation of natural values to the sociable and more intensive activities which rely on the natural environment as a setting rather than for its immediate and intrinsic values. Similarly, the evidence provided by Burton (1974) indicates a range of preference from solitary to sociable and that of Palmer et al. (1977) suggests the existence of a dimension of perception from highly structured, organised places in the countryside, to the more dispersed types of recreation taking

place in more remote locations. Furthermore, evidence from the qualitative accounts obtained in this study also supports this conceptualisation. The use of these two concepts will allow scaling of individuals in terms of the intensity and strength of their attitudes on this dimension, a step that requires the assumption that the concepts are related to each other.

Once the basis of the attitudinal concepts had been decided in the manner described, the next stage was to select appropriate attitude items to represent this dimension. Particular care was necessary here, since the content, wording and presentation of the items would clearly have to be standardised to avoid any bias with different individuals. The main concern was the presentation of the concepts in everyday language so that they would be clearly understood by all respondents. Research in this field in the USA suggests the existence of commonsense notions which are likely to be shared by the researcher and by (usually the more highly educated) part of his sample (Lee, 1977; Buchanan et al., 1981), but which may not be held by the remainder of the sample. Bias may arise through the acceptance by only some of the respondents of the researcher's own values and preconceptions. In order to avoid bias in the presentation of the attitude scale, qualitative accounts of countryside recreation experiences were scrutinised in detail, and lists of key words and phrases were compiled. This qualitative source material was drawn from the depth interviews carried out in the present study, and also from video-taped interviews and transcripts of depth interviews and group discusions from the Countryside Commission's National Survey of Countryside Recreation.

A number of attitude items were successively developed and refined from the pool of key words and phrases. These were used in several pilot surveys until 21 items were obtained which did not appear to cause problems or bias in response (see Table 9.3). Although it was intended to use approximately an equal number of positively and negatively worded items, it proved difficult to design items which were worded positively in favour of that pole of the dimension which indicated low adherence to the values of the traditional ideology (e.g., items 2, 7, 11, 13 and 17). Similarly, it proved easier to word items in favour of that pole of the dimension which indicated adherence to the values of the traditional ideology (e.g., items 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 20). This consideration suggests that everyday language is well supplied with concepts which describe the countryside in terms of the traditional ideology but there are particularly few constructs which embody a conflicting view. This methodological problem itself suggests that the traditional ideology is a strongly institutionalised form of meaning ascribed to this particular social and environmental situation.

**Reliability**

The problem of reliability, unlike that of validity, is purely a technical one. A measure of reliability, alpha (McKennell, 1977), can be obtained from the summed average correlations between the items. In order to accomplish this, it is necessary to pre-test the scale on a sample of at least fifty individuals (Nunnally, 1967). As this was not possible because of the scale of the project, an

Table 9.3 Attitude statements

1. The most important thing about going to the country is getting close to nature.

2. I prefer to visit places in the country where there's something provided to attract people.

3. I prefer to find quiet uncrowded places to visit in the country

4. Being in the country soon gets boring.

5. When I go for a trip to the country with my family or friends we prefer to get away from other people.

6. Noisy events and places that attract a lot of people are out of place in the country.

7. There should be a wide variety of things to see and do provided in the country.

8. I think it's important to go for a walk when you visit the country

9. The countryside doesn't interest me at all.

10. I think there's a right way and a wrong way to behave in the country.

11. There should be more scope for recreation in the country.

12. If I go out into the country I prefer to get away from all signs of civilisation, right out into the wild.

13. I don't think it matters what people do in the country as long as they enjoy their visit.

14. There's no need for the planners to provide leisure facilities in the country.

15. There are too many people visiting the countryside these days.

16. The country is more interesting than the city.

17. I like meeting other people when I go out to places in the country

18. The countryside is all just farms and fields really, it's difficult finding somewhere to go.

19. I like to visit places in the countryside where there's something interesting to see.

20. The countryside is for quiet and peaceful recreation only.

21. I like to spend the day driving around when I visit the country.

alternative procedure is to treat the main survey as the pre-test, and to carry out the calculations a posteriori. Items which do not discriminate consistently between respondents can then be excluded from analysis of the scale.

An item which correlates highly with all the other items may be said to perform well, since an individual who responds to a particular item in a certain direction will be expected to respond in the same direction to all other items measuring the same dimension. Alpha is therefore a measure of the internal consistency of the scale, and an alpha score of 0.70 and above is considered adequate (McKennell, 1977). Correlations between items were calculated using Spearman's r since the data are ordinal. Although it has become accepted practice recently to use interval statistics for ordinal data (McKennell, 1977; Doering and Hubbard, 1979), in this case it was felt there was no need to invoke the metric assumption, especially as appropriate non-metric techniques of analysis were available.

An alpha coefficient of 0.70 was calculated for the final scale of 17 items. Items 4, 9, 15 and 18 were excluded from the final scale since they did not differentiate clearly among the sample. During subsequent analysis it was decided to use a sub-scale which reflected the respondents' sensitivity to other people in the countryside. This comprised six of the statements (2, 3, 5, 6, 12 and 17) which all reflected attitudes to other people in the countryside. Calculated alpha for this scale was 0.64, which although lower than the standard value of 0.70, may still be considered acceptable, particularly as the sub-scale was composed

of only six statements and the number of statements tends to increase reliability.

Multivariate analysis of the attitude items was undertaken as a further check on the validity and reliability of the scales, and the results of this analysis are presented in Chapter Thirteen. This analysis supported the adequacy of the whole scale, but did not clearly provide evidence that the six statements related to attitudes to other people were a coherent sub-group. Analysis showed, however, that these particular statements were rated consistently in a similar direction by a certain section of the sample and consequently this sub-scale was retained.

The items were scored on a five-point scale: agree strongly, agree slightly, neutral/don't know, disagree slightly and disagree strongly. There is no evidence to suggest that a scale using a greater number of points is more accurate (Nunnally, 1967). The median value for the overall scale was 58, with a minimum score of 31 and a maximum value of 81. For the sub-scale, (henceforth referred to as scale two) which was included in the main scale (scale one), the median was 21, with a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 30. A high score on each scale indicates a high degree of adherence to the values of the traditional ideology.

**Elicitation of constructs**

The attitude scale presents respondents with constructs which are assumed make up part of their cognitive process. It is necessary to complement this technique with one which allows respondents to present their own mental constructs with the minimum of prompting

from stimuli provided by the interviewer. One approach to this is the depth interview, which has been discussed above. Other, more sophisticated techniques tend to suffer from the serious disadvantage of being 'culturally unfair' in that they are biased in favour of the more articulate respondents who are relatively more skilled in expressing themselves verbally or in writing. The use of the repertory grid test, for instance, (Kelly, 1955), which has proved popular recently in geographical research (Hudson, 1980), has been criticised on these grounds by Canter et al. (1976). In survey research aimed at the general population they found that respondents experienced difficulty in the use of the repertory grid and there was a clear bias towards the more highly educated respondents who were better able to handle the technique. Hudson (1980) has also drawn attention to a theoretical limitation of the grid method, namely that the assumptions on which the methodology is based cannot be realistically applied to most social surveys. These considerations, together with the problem of successfully motivating a respondent to co-operate through a long and somewhat complex interview, on a topic which may not necessarily be of overriding importance to him or her and consequently may not stimulate total commitment, are all serious problems inherent in the nature of the interview as a form of social interaction.

Canter et al. (1976) developed the multiple sorting task to minimise these problems and it is precisely for this reason that it was decided to use this method here. The sorting task involves presenting the respondent with a number of stimulus items,

typically pictures or photographs, with the instruction, 'can you sort these pictures into groups and then tell me what it is that makes each group different from the others?' In this way constructs can be elicited in a simple manner, based on a carefully selected range of stimuli: the group descriptions are mental constructs representing those features of the total set of pictures considered important or significant. The groups of pictures obtained from the sorting process are also available for analysis, and differences in perception of similar constructs can be examined.

A set of twenty five photographs was used in the present study (see appendix). The photographs were intended to represent as wide as possible a range of recreational environments. Two dimensions of difference were used: a) from environments organised or used for intensive recreation, with buildings and facilities, to 'natural' environments showing little obvious human impact and used for highly dispersed recreation; and b) from environments with a high level of recreational use to those with a low level of recreational use. The photographs were taken mostly by the author and were presented to respondents as 100 x 150mm colour prints. All but four of the final set of photographs were taken within a twenty mile radius of Edinburgh, although none of the pictures were correctly identified in the course of the interviews when respondents occasionally hazarded guesses. Two other pictures were taken in Yorkshire, near Sheffield and the remaining two, which were not photographs, were taken from published prints which had a similar format and finish to the other pictures, and represented

'picturesque' country village scenes. A standard composition was used for all but one of the final photographs. This was a middle- to long-distance shot showing detail in the foreground; the one exception was a narrow angle close up photograph.

The use of photographs as surrogates for environmental situations appears to be appropriate (Shuttleworth, 1981), especially in this study where the medium is concerned with the attributes of a particular scene and not with its unique characteristics, as in landscape appreciation or evaluation. Although it is not claimed that the sorting task is completely free from bias, it is less prone to bias than other techniques. Undoubtedly those respondents who are more skilled in self expression will cope more successfully with the task and may produce a greater range of constructs, being able to manipulate words and images more skilfully. Secondly, stimuli used will influence the results insofar as the constructs obtained will reflect the content of the photographs.

The sorting task was undertaken as part of the interview and respondents were asked to produce as many groups as possible, using photographs more than once if necessary in different groups. Respondents were also asked to indicate which photographs represented environments they would like to visit, and which photographs represented the sort of environment they would typically not go to, and to give a reason for this choice. Although this is a very simple technique for measuring preference, it extended the sorting task by producing groups of photographs for each respondent representing 'liked' and 'disliked' environments.

The use of this technique specifically includes affect, i.e., positive or negative evaluation of the photographs in terms of some construct.

**Layout of questionnaire**

In order to provide a suitable introduction to the questionnaire the interview was introduced as being on the subject of 'leisure activities' and the first section included questions on leisure activities in and out of the home. This pinpointed visiting the countryside as a leisure activity and led from the general to the particular. Such an approach was necessary for two reasons. First, if the interview was introduced as being on the subject of countryside recreation, it might bias non-response in that those with an active interest would respond more willingly, while those who participated infrequently or those who were unable to participate would be more likely to refuse. Although this difficulty would also occur with the subject of 'leisure' it was felt that the direction and the intensity of any bias through non-response which occurred would be less than that occurring as a result of an interview based on the subject of countryside recreation.

Secondly, both the term 'countryside recreation' and the subject itself may not be familiar or important to many people. A household survey which is perhaps of lesser importance than many other concerns of people's lives may lead to diminished co-operation by respondents, whereas a gradual approach to the subject would maximise the respondent's co-operation and interest in the project.

It was decided to use the respondent's own definition of countryside instead of imposing one. The introductory section of the questionnaire was particularly useful here as it allowed the respondent to work from leisure activities in general towards the countryside as a leisure environment, and then to explore in considerable detail the meaning of that leisure environment, its perceived characteristics and attributes and the experience it provides. The data from the general leisure questions have not been included in the analysis for this project and are not presented here.

The section of the questionnaire which introduced the countryside discussed the respondent's last trip in an open-ended fashion. Where the respondent had not visited the countryside in the last year, it was ascertained whether he or she had ever visited the countryside for leisure purposes, or whether he or she had any desire to visit the countryside for leisure purposes in the future. If the latter, the interview proceeded with the remainder of the questionnaire, although the checklist questions on places and activities were rephrased to read, 'if you visited the country which of the following places would you <u>like</u> to visit' and 'which of the following activities would you <u>like</u> to do'. The question on perceived benefits was rephrased to read, 'if you visited the country, which six of the following would contribute most to your enjoyment'. The data from these interviews were then included for analysis with the data for those respondents who did visit the countryside. The data for those respondents who were regular visitors (i.e., once a year or more) were also analysed separately

but no significant differences were found between these two groups.

Respondents who had not visited the countryside and showed no desire to do so in future were excluded from the main part of the interview, since the wording and content of the questions on countryside recreation would not be relevant to them. The questionnaire was presented in the following order:

a) introductory section on general leisure

b) whether or not countryside visited

c) places and activities checklist

d) benefits/satisfactions checklist

e) photograph sorting

f) attitude scale

g) socio-economic characteristics

The last section (g) will be discussed in Chapter Twelve. Respondents were presented with each checklist on a piece of card. The order in which checklist and attitude items were presented to respondents was varied systematically from person to person to avoid bias in favour of items at the top of the list. The photographs were presented in random order to each respondent. During the design stage the complete questionnaire was piloted a number of times to ensure that both the format and presentation of the questions were effective.

## 10: Sample design and analysis

It was noted earlier that sample choice is of great importance. It is necessary to sample the whole population, rather than only countryside visitors, or some other sub-section, since the perceptions of regular or committed countryside visitors may well differ from those of other people. Similarly perceptions and behaviour may well differ across some non-random social characteristics. One notable aspect of most of the perception studies reviewed in Chapter Eight was the lack of a broadly based sample and therefore this survey was aimed at individuals at the household level, especially as one of the main aims was to identify the range of variation of the variables of interest.

Secondly, in order to examine the variations in perception among specific social groups (namely, sex, stage in the lifecycle, educational and social class groups), it was decided that a structured sample was more appropriate than a random sample. This was because an even distribution of these particular social groups was required in the sample, rather than an approximation to the actual population distribution of these social groups. Two neighbouring housing areas were selected in south Edinburgh: a council housing estate, Oxgangs; and a private housing estate, Fairmilehead. This choice of area ensured equal, and also relatively easy, access to countryside, thus standardising opportunities for all respondents. The structuring of the sample by type of housing enabled a sufficient number of people from each

social class to be interviewed. Both areas provide housing for a wide variety of age groups, but family housing predominates (see Table 10.2 for age and housing composition in this area). The use of the birthday rule when more than one person was available for interview ensured selection of an even distribution of age groups. Streets were followed in order starting at the east end of each estate and the residents of every fifth house or flat were approached for interview.

The size of the sample was determined largely by several constraints on the project. Because of the exploratory nature of the study, it was not intended to test hypotheses for verification. It was decided instead to explore the full range of variables in the process of cognition, while using a small sample, to minimise problems and time involved in handling and coding the data. This approach allowed a much wider range of variables to be explored and also may be used to generate hypotheses for further research. Thus, information on a maximum of almost 200 variables related to behaviour and cognition in countryside recreation was collected for each respondent. Secondly, as a result of both the multi-operational methodology employed and the decision to explore the full range of variables involved in perception, attitudes and behaviour, the interviews took some time to administer. The minimum time for a full interview was around thirty minutes, the maximum one hour. Further, because household interviewing must take place at weekends and during evenings if the sample is not to be biased towards those not in full-time employment the length of the period during which the data were collected had also to be taken into

consideration.

Thirdly, multivariate analysis techniques such as MDS and cluster analysis are not based on inferential statistics and thus they cannot be used to draw conclusions about the population. A suitable sample size and resulting standard error are thus strictly not paramount considerations: inferences may be made only if the results are replicated with data from different samples. Furthermore, an exploratory study such as this can only produce hypotheses for testing against further samples. Finally, owing to the nature of the exploratory techniques of data analysis involved, the size of the sample was restricted by the MDS program which cannot handle samples of more than 80 individuals.

As a result of these considerations, the sample was restricted to around 100. Although the sampling error associated with this sample size is still quite large (approximately plus or minus 10 per cent), it does allow a general indication of the range of variation within the the data, while also being of a convenient size for MDS to handle. In fact, 106 interviews were completed: 81 of these were full interviews while 25 respondents showed no interest in visitng the countryside and only completed the short interview. For multivariate analysis one of the 81 full interviews was discarded and the remaining 80 were used.

Response

Table 4.4 shows a breakdown of non-response. From this table it may be seen that the response rate was 58 percent. Bias resulting from non-response was not considered to be a serious problem on the

Table 10.1 Breakdown of non-response

| Response rate | number | percent |
|---|---|---|
| Total interviews attempted | 108 | 58 |
| Total successful interviews completed | 106 | 57 |
| Total refusals | 80 | 42 |
| Total households approached | 188 | 100 |

| Characteristics of non-response | number of non-respondents | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | male | female | total |
| Age breakdown (estimated) of non-respondents | | | |
| Young | 8 | 14 | 22 |
| Middle-aged | 10 | 20 | 30 |
| Elderly | 2 | 26 | 28 |
| Total refusals | 20 | 60 | 80 |

| Reasons given for refusal of interview | number of non-respondents |
|---|---|
| Too busy | 46 |
| Not interested | 26 |
| Other | 8 |
| Total | 80 |

following grounds. Because of the length and complexity of the questionnaire, the introduction emphasized the time involved and consequently refusals were fairly high on this count. It will be seen that 'too busy' and 'not interested' were the most important reasons for non-cooperation, and the latter reason highlights the importance of not introducing the questionnaire on the subject of 'the countryside'. The high proportion of female non-response can be explained by the fact that the interviewer was male.

Recalls were made to a number of those houses where no answer was

obtained at the first call, but because of the constraints of time on the project it was not possible to follow up all such contacts. Furthermore, since the sample was designed with the intention of obtaining an acceptable distribution of socio-economic characteristics and not to draw an accurate representation of the population structure, it was not considered necessary to follow up all those contacts where no answer was obtained. It is possible that those people who are at home less frequently lead a more active leisure lifestyle, which may include visiting the country. Since interviews took place on summer weekends it transpired that some of the respondents interviewed on the second or subsequent contact had actually been on trips to the countryside at the time of the initial contact attempt. It is thus possible that the sample may have underestimated the number of countryside visitors. However, as Table 10.2 indicates, the rate of countryside visiting shown by this sample is, allowing for sampling error, very similar to that obtained by the Scottish Leisure Survey (SLS), which was carried out by the Countryside Commission for Scotland in 1981.

Table 10.2 also shows the composition of the sample and a comparison with data from the 1981 Population Census for the appropriate Enumeration Districts from which the sample was drawn. The interviews were carried out in the same year (1981) as this Census. The sample provides an even distribution of types of household and of sex and age groups, and although the sample was not designed to reflect the population distribution for these variables, the patterns are actually quite similar. Despite the high proportion of refusals among middle-aged and elderly women,

Table 10.2 Comparison of sample response characteristics with 1981 Census data for survey area Enumeration Districts

| | Sample characteristics | Survey area Enumeration Districts (1981 Census) |
|---|---|---|
| Type of tenure | percentage of households | |
| Owner occupied | 45* | 41 |
| Private rent | | 7 |
| Council/SSHA | 55* | 52 |
| Household composition | | |
| 1 person | 13 | 17 |
| 2 persons | 34 | 34 |
| 3 persons | 24 | 19 |
| 4 persons | 18 | 19 |
| 5 persons | 9 | 8 |
| 6 or more persons | 2 | 3 |
| Car ownership | | |
| Households with car | 66 | 56 |
| Households without car | 34 | 44 |
| Sex | percentage of respondents | |
| Male | 52 | 47 |
| Female | 48 | 53 |
| Age | | |
| 14 to 29 | 34 | 29 |
| 30 to 54 | 30 | 36 |
| 55 plus | 36 | 35 |
| Countryside visiting | | SLS data (1981) |
| Visited country in last month | 38 | 43 |
| Visited in last year | 65 | 70 |
| Answered long questionnaire | 76 | |
| Had not made trips but wished to | 10 | |
| No interest in countryside | 24 | |

Note to Table 10.2: * indicates that the number of households chosen from each housing type was decided as part of the structured sampling design. Owner occupied and privately rented housing types are combined for this purpose.

this group is not seriously under-represented. The rate of car ownership among those sampled is slightly higher than than that for the survey area, but this may be explained by the fact that the figure for the sample reflects both ownership of, and access to, a car, whereas the Census figure represents only those households which own a car. A few individuals may have access to cars outside their own household, thus inflating the number of households in the sample with access to a car. No social group is thus seriously under-represented in the sample, and it therefore appears that the structured sample has been successful in obtaining an even distribution of social groups.

In conclusion, Tables 10.1 and 10.2 suggest that, whatever sources of bias may have entered the data at the sampling stage, none is likely to seriously influence the specific aims of the research project. The structured sampling design has provided an even distribution of socioeconomic characteristics, and any response bias is unlikely to be related to either propensity to visit or, more importantly, perception of the countryside.

**Analysis**

The specification of research questions, techniques of data collection, sample design and mode of analysis are all part of an inter-related research strategy. The rationale underlying the choice of any one of these elements should influence the choice of the other aspects of the research design. In the discussion in Chapter Six it was proposed that the principal aim of the research is an exploratory one and hence the project is based on an

exploratory research design.

The lack of any accepted theoretical basis in the study of attitudes and perceptions of the countryside necessitates the identification of some acceptable baselines for future study. Consequently the exploratory approach of identifying and describing the most important elements of cognition and behaviour, the range of variation in these variables and the identification of groups of individuals who have similar perceptions, attitudes and behaviour patterns has been adopted. The search for individuals with similar patterns of perceptions and behaviour requires the use of techniques which can handle the multiple nature of the input data, where individuals are given values simultaneously on a number of variables. The multivariate methods which can deal with this type of data are themselves essentially exploratory, inductive techniques, which seek to uncover the major features of interest within a data set and generate ideas for further investigation. Such further ideas may then be framed as hypotheses for empirical testing against new data (Wishart, 1977).

Exploratory data analysis offers fruitful insights in this particular context. As Cox and Jones argue, its value has not been realised until recently:

> "It is to be hoped that quantitative geography in the 1980's will be less afflicted than in the past with a craving for the semblance of elegance, exactness and rigour exuded by inferential ideas, and that geographers will show more willingness to engage in the uninhibited exploration of their data, guided but not dominated by the procedures devised by statisticians."
>
> (1981, p. 142)

An inductive, rather than deductive, approach will allow the

structure and pattern in the variables of interest to emerge without the imposition of an arbitrary framework which may serve only to direct attention to the researcher's own preconceptions. As Gould (1981) argues, this strategy enables one to stay close to the subject matter of the inquiry, and "allows the data to speak for itself" (p. 166). Such an approach has been developed in other disciplines in the social sciences, notably in the grounded theory of Glaser and Strauss (1967) in sociology.

It is necessary to take into consideration the limitations of such an approach however: multivariate methods will always produce 'solutions' but the researcher has to decide on their validity. Consequently a multi-operational approach to analysis is required. If several exploratory techniques produce similar results then there is a greater degree of certainty that any structures found in the data exist independently and were not imposed by the methods of analysis.

As a result of these considerations it was decided to adopt a two stage approach to analysis. In the first stage, the calculation of descriptive statistics and cross-tabulation of variables with socio-economic characteristics was used to give a general impression of the range of unidimensional variation within the data and also provided a basis for comparison with, and support for, the findings from multivariate analysis. Secondly, multivariate analysis using multidimensional scaling (Coxon and Jones, 1977) and cluster analysis (Everitt, 1977) allowed exploration and graphical presentation of the data structures. Multidimensional scaling has

been used in this particular way by Canter et al. (1976) and Canter (1981), and this research indicates that the technique has much to offer.

The multivariate techniques were chosen for three specific reasons. Both techniques handle non-metric data, and since the questionnaire data were collected in either ordinal or binary form, these are, strictly speaking, the only appropriate techniques available. The use of metric techniques, such as factor or principal components analysis, would have required transformation of the data and the suspension of the assumptions on which the metric methods are based. Secondly, the latter metric techniques are relatively more complex than multidimensional scaling and cluster analysis, and this was felt to be a significant disadvantage in both their use and in the interpretation of results. Finally, the capacity of multidimensional scaling to produce graphic output representing the relative positions on some dimension of the variables was considered to be a significant advantage. This aspect of the method allows a visual comparison of the relative similarity of individuals and variables.

**Multidimensional scaling**

Multidimensional scaling is a technique which seeks to represent a set of objects which vary on a number of variables in a space of minimum dimensionality, such that the distances in the space match as closely as possible the observed dissimilarities between the objects in the data set (Gatrell, 1981). If one takes a number of individuals, n, and rates them on p variables, then the matrix n x p will contain the information on the differences and similarities

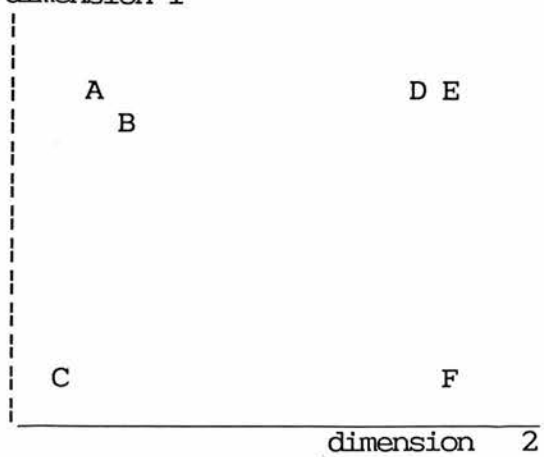
between individuals. A dissimilarity coefficient is a measure of the total dissimilarity between any two individuals across all variables. If the two individuals are completely alike this will be zero. A matrix n x n of dissimilarity coefficients may be calculated from matrix n x p. This matrix will then contain information on how similar individuals are to each other. The particular method of MDS used here, smallest space analysis (Bloombaum, 1970; Program Library Unit, 1977), then produces output according to the criterion outlined at the start of this paragraph. The distances on the plot should approximate to the magnitude of the dissimilarities in the matrix n x n, so that those individuals who are most alike in terms of the variables will be closest together, and those who are most unalike will be the furthest apart. A measure known as stress (Coxon and Jones, 1977) determines how closely the distances on the plot match the actual dissimilarities between individuals.

The appropriate program for smallest space analysis at Edinburgh is the Minissa program in the MDS(X) package (Program Library Unit, 1977) which was developed by Lingoes (1973) and Lingoes and Roskam (1973). The choice of dissimilarity coefficient is one of the two main problems with the use of multidimensional scaling: there are few, if any, objectively defined criteria for selection. In this case choice was limited to the manhattan and euclidean metrics (see appendix); these were the only dissimilarity coefficients available that dealt with binary data. Both were used and provided identical results, since they are closely related to each other (the main difference is that the euclidean metric involves squaring the

dissimilarities). The use of another, different dissimilarity coefficient would have been helpful, since as Gatrell (1981) points out, it is not known how sensitive MDS solutions are to the choice of dissimilarity coefficient.

The other problem associated with the use of multidimensional scaling concerns the interpretation of results. Figure 10.1 represents a hypothetical MDS plot, showing six objects (A to F). For the sake of illustration, this is a 'good' solution, where the objects are clearly similar to, or different from, each other. It is clear that A and B (and D and E) are very similar, in terms of the original criteria of measurement and hence will have dissimilarity coefficients near zero. C and F are very different from each other and also from the other points. In terms of dimension one, A, B, D and E are all similar to each other, and different from the other points. Thus, multidimensional scaling arranges objects in terms of <u>dimensions of similarity</u>. It is necessary for the researcher to name these dimensions on the basis of some aspect of the data which appears to be common to all the points. There is no rigorous way of doing this: it is entirely a problem of interpreting the data in a meaningful way.

Figure 10.1 Hypothetical MDS plot



**Cluster analysis**

Cluster analysis is a form of mathematical classification of objects, such that objects are assigned to groups or clusters on the basis of observed dissimilarities among the objects so that within cluster heterogeneity is minimised, while the difference between clusters is maximised (Everitt, 1977). The starting point is again the n x p matrix of individuals by variables and the individuals or objects from the calculated dissimilarity matrix are assigned by means of various algorithms to clusters. These clusters, in hierarchical aggregation methods, are then subsequently fused until a specified end point is reached, normally a minimum of two clusters.

Everitt (1979) has drawn attention to four major problems associated with the use of cluster analysis. First is the choice of a clustering algorithm: there are numerous methods available and very little in the way of criteria to suggest which are the most appropriate for any situation. In this case it was decided to follow the advice given in the manual (Wishart, 1977) and use the five recommended analyses for samples of less than 150. These were: (a) Ward's hierarchical clustering algorithm starting from a random configuration using squared euclidean distance as dissimilarity coefficient; (b) relocation analysis starting from the eight cluster solution in the previous analysis using error sum of squares distance as dissimilarity coefficient; (c) relocation analysis starting from a random configuration using error sum of squares distance; (d) relocation analysis starting from a random configuration using shape difference; and (e) mode analysis which

uses its own built-in dissimilarity coefficient.

The choice of dissimilarity coefficient is the second problem, as with MDS, and this was resolved by using the recommended analyses which included dissimilarity coefficients. Thirdly, there is the problem of deciding on the final number of clusters. Normal practice is to select the solution at which there is a marked drop in the value of the fusion coefficient (Everitt, 1977). With hierarchical clustering it is possible to have a large number of clusters at one level of aggregation, which may then be subsumed within, for example, two clusters at the highest level, yet both solutions may still be meaningful since individuals may be differentiated on several levels of generality. The use of cluster analysis in conjunction with MDS is particularly appropriate to this problem, since the delimitation of clusters does not apply to MDS output, while the hierarchical nature of any groups will be seen clearly in the MDS plot and the distances between individuals may indicate coherence of various groups. The existence of separate information unconnected with the cluster analysis which will lead to a decision on the final number of clusters is generally accepted as the best solution to this problem. Since one of the aims of the analysis was to identify groups of individuals with similar patterns of cognition or behaviour, this difficulty was overcome by reference to the original input variables.

Finally, there is the problem of defining a stable cluster solution (Everitt, 1979). There are no criteria laid down to decide whether a number of clustering methods should all produce

identical results, or whether only a majority should produce identical results, or what degree of similarity between different cluster solutions is acceptable. For present purposes it was felt that stability should not be defined too stringently and a stable solution was accepted where a majority of the algorithms produced identical results, or where only one case was allocated 'wrongly'. This was partly because algorithm (d) consistently failed to produce meaningful results of any kind and thus only four methods were actually considered in deciding on the stability of a solution.

# 11: Unstructured Accounts

The purpose of this chapter is to present evidence from the accounts obtained from respondents during the preliminary exploratory interviews. The preliminary interviews were used to explore in depth respondents' perceptions and conceptions of the countryside as an environment for recreation in as unstructured a manner as possible, to allow the full range of individual concepts to be expressed, with minimum influence from the interviewer or the questionnaire. Identification of the range of concepts used by individuals to describe the countryside was of importance in two aspects of the study. In and of themselves these concepts were indicative of the differences in perception among individuals. Secondly, they were also necessary as a preliminary to designing the final measuring instrument, the questionnaire, which would thus be based on the full range of concepts available to individuals.

Although rigorous sampling methods were not used in obtaining the respondents for the preliminary interviews, an attempt was made to ensure that the individuals interviewed represented a wide cross-section of society. As a result, interviews were carried out in two areas, one an inner city council housing estate, the other an area of mixed housing (owner occupied and council) on the city boundary. The latter area was also used subsequently for the full questionnaire survey. Twenty interviews were obtained, although the amount of usable information provided by respondents varied greatly.

The interview schedule was designed with the intention of allowing the respondents to speak at length, with as little influence from the interviewer's questions as possible. The schedule (which is presented in the appendix) was designed around several main areas of interest. The first concerned general leisure activities and was intended simply as an introduction; therefore it was not pursued at length but was used as a 'lead-in' to the subject of leisure use of the countryside. Secondly the topic of countryside visiting was introduced, either by the respondent as part of his or her general leisure activities, or otherwise by the interviewer, and the respondent was asked to talk about and describe recent trips to the countryside. Those respondents who did not visit the countryside or who expressed no interest in the countyside were not interviewed. Respondents were then asked what they most enjoyed about these trips, about the kind of places they liked to visit and about the kind of places, if any, they did not like to visit. Finally, the questions 'is the countryside important to you' and 'do you think the countryside has changed at all in the last ten or twenty years' were used to allow the respondent to talk about the countryside in more general terms. A number of the interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed, the others were recorded in writing at the time.

Full use was made of non-directive prompting techniques, for instance the repetition of respondents' words, the instructions 'why is that?' and 'can you tell me a bit more about that?' together with the use of pauses by the interviewer to encourage further comments. The techniques are described fully by Morton-

Williams (1977; 1978). The technique proved more successful in some cases than others, depending on how articulate the respondent was, and whether or not he or she was inclined to talk at length. Some respondents provided only one word answers to the questions and these responses proved of limited value.

Excerpts from the unstructured accounts are presented here as illustrative of the range of experience and thinking of people about visiting the countryside. No formal attempt has been made to use any kind of content analysis: all concepts and ideas which were elicited are presented. It should be stressed however that relative importance of each concept or type of experience may not be inferred from the number of statements, or from the nature of individual statements. Each account merely expresses a point of view, a personal experience, or one individual way of seeing things. As such it puts 'flesh on the bones' of the empirical statements to be made later; and by illustrating aspects of human experience and behaviour brings life and variety to the generalisations necessitated by the simplifying methods of analysis which are used in the main part of the survey.

The accounts are presented in a similar order to that in which they were solicited in the questionnaire schedule. The respondents' own words have in all cases been strictly adhered to. Comments have occasionally been made to put statements in context, but for the most part the accounts are presented without additional remarks as these would usually only duplicate the content of the statements. An indication of the socio-economic characteristics of each respondent is included, but these were not recorded in detail since

no attempt at cross-tabulation was intended. The information from the introductory section on general leisure activities is not presented.

Respondents were asked to describe recent trips they had made. Several accounts of these trips are presented here. They complement the information presented in chapter one, on what is known about general patterns of participation in countryside recreation, and the detailed evidence presented in the following chapters on patterns of activity.

> "The last time we went was three weeks ago, my wife and I. We went for a drive, out to the market at East Fortune, then we went to North Berwick, Dunbar...we had a meal there...then we drove to Haddington and then home. That's the kind of drive we usually do."
>
> Skilled worker, 54, married

> "We do all sorts of things. We go with the children, sometimes with relatives as well. We've been strawberry picking, we go on picnics, we go swimming...visit relatives near Lanark, sometimes go fishing as well."
>
> Housewife, 43, two teenage children

> "We like walking, maybe a picnic, going on a nature trail... but mostly being in the country, just being there."
>
> Retired woman

> "I went with my wife and son. We drove out to West Linton... we drove out and sat and watched sports there, football it was, then we just sat and enjoyed the place."
>
> Office worker, 44

> "We went to Kinloch Rannoch at the weekend. We just sat in the car when we got there, and breathed the fresh air. It was nice just to look around, just to see the countryside."
>
> Railway worker, 56

> "We went to St. Andrew's, to Craigour Park. I like that because there's a lot in it, for the children, ball games, boating. Also if we go on a drive I like to see the shops."
>
> Married woman, 30, factory worker

These statements illustrate the kinds of experiences involved in countryside recreation. Whereas these examples by no means

represent the total range of possible activities, they are typical of those informal pursuits, centred around the drive, such as visiting country villages, parks and beauty spots, walking, picnicking, relaxing, playing with children or just sitting in the car which are already known to be the most significant aspects of countryside recreation pursuits.

Further questioning was aimed at identifying those aspects of the countryside experience which were most enjoyed. This was first related to the trip(s) the respondent had just described, and secondly to the countryside in general. A representative selection of the constructs expressed is presented here.

> "I like to visit the country for its own sake - I go for the country rather than the town. I like the scenery, the animals...there's fresher air, it's healthy. The country is refreshing, it tires you out but it doesn't wear you out, you get worn out in the town...I also like the social side of it, going with friends. I would enjoy a picnic with friends, lots of friends....also going with the family, especially with the children, because I enjoy what the children enjoy."
>
> Woman, 27, single, office worker

> "I like going to quiet places, working in a noisy place, so if it's quiet and peaceful it's a change, not like the town. I like the peace most of all. You feel you can relax... everybody needs it."
>
> Married woman, 30, factory worker

> "It's a chance to enjoy myself, and it's also company for me, now since my husband has died. I go with my daughter, my son-in-law, and a friend."
>
> Retired woman

> "It's the scenery I enjoy most. It's also a chance to get away from everything...it's the calmness, the quietness of secluded places."
>
> Middle-aged housewife

> "We go down to the Borders, or the east coast, sometimes with another family we know well...it's pleasing scenery, it's away from here, away from the telephone, there's a lot of pressure here. To be able to relax away from here, away from the telephone, that's very important. If you're in a working

groove all week it's important to lift your nose up and see there's something over the horizon. I'd certainly miss it if we weren't able to."

Doctor, 37, married, 2 children

"I enjoy the solitude you can get in places like that, you can go anywhere you like in the hills, while there are a lot of limitations placed on you in the town. It's the freedom..."

Man, twenties, single

The contrast between town and country appears very strongly in these accounts. So too do the notions of rest and relaxation, escape from pressure, peace and quiet, fresh air, health, freedom, the scenery, and social or family considerations.

Respondents were asked about the kind of places they liked to visit in the country, and also about the kind of places they did not like to visit. A number of individuals did not mention specific types of place as either likes or dislikes, but expressed a liking for all types of countryside places. These comments are typified by one respondent, a retired lady, who declared,

"I like going everywhere...there's nowhere in the country I wouldn't like."

Other respondents were more specific about likes and dislikes for particular countryside environments, and the following accounts indicate something of the range of responses.

"I don't like places which are too well laid out, too well kept, for real countryside. You get places which are too crowded, with too many people, they're still nice places, but too crowded. I like open spaces with hardly any people."

Woman, single, early twenties

"I find my working time involves close contact with people and I really don't want that when I go out into the country; so parking spots, picnic spots, where I'm forced to consort with other people in terms of physical proximity, don't appeal to me. So I wouldn't use them from choice."

Doctor, 37, married

"I'm not really fussy about nature, the wildlife or anything

like that...like some people are. I just like to get out for the day. I'm not interested in places that are bleak, with nothing there."

Man, twenties, single, office worker

"It's nice going with other people, but not going where other people are. I like a few people around, but not a lot. I like places that are only slightly remote, not very remote, though...Probably with a teashop somewhere! I also like parks, and country houses, for the tended landscape, and the architecture and art."

Woman, twenties, single, office worker

I like visiting the country for the peace and quiet, to get away from everybody. The sort of places I go to are the sort of places where there are things to do there...I don't like places that are empty."

Woman, twenties, single

These statements illustrate a range of preference for different kinds of countryside environment: those who dislike environments with what they consider to be too many people, or facilities that attract people; those who dislike environments they perceive as lacking in interest or activity; and those who take a middle position, between these two poles. The relative nature of these perceptions is however clearly demonstrated by the last statement: for that person, 'getting away from everybody' is achieved by visiting places which are 'not empty' but 'have things to do' there. Clearly the meaning of a set of words used by one individual will not be the same for another person.

Another important aspect of preference for countryside places was demonstrated by the following statement:

"Well it's difficult to say what kind of places I like visiting, because there's the places you want to go yourself, and the places you want to go with the children. There's the really quiet places you want to go all by yourself, and there's places for the children, where you can keep them amused, where there's things to do, facilities for them."

Housewife, 2 children

This was also well put by the father of two young children who

said, "With the kids you can't get out into the wilds any more." Another respondent, an elderly lady, perhaps thinking of the days when her own children were young, said she particularly liked to visit

> "places where you can take children...of interest to children, like parks, beaches and so on."

Finally, another respondent, the mother of two young children who had recently moved to the area, said

> "I prefer the seaside to the country now, really...I don't know this area well yet, and of course the children are too young still. I used to visit the country quite a lot before ...before we moved here, but I stopped because of the children and the new area."

These statements show clearly the influence of raising children on visiting the country, whether in the constraints on visiting particular types of environment, or on overall frequency of visiting.

Other aspects of perception which appeared to be important, to some individuals at least, and which arose in the course of discussion of the countryside in general, are illustrated by the following statements.

> "But lots of people do like busy places...for other people generally, if they cannot be bothered to find things to do themselves, then it's a good thing for leisure facilities to be provided for them."
>
> Retired woman

> "There shouldn't be things provided in the countryside - you should make your own amusements."
>
> Retired woman

> "These days people expect these things [facilities] - but some places are overrun, with lots of people, tourists and so on."
>
> Middle-aged housewife

> "[The countryside] is busier now, there's more people now, but that's a good thing really."
>
> Woman, 30

These differing attitudes to recreational provision, whether for or against, reflect a variety of perceptions of the recreational situation. Another opinion voiced by some respondents was of considerable interest; as one person said,

> "There's a way to treat the countryside and a way not to treat it. The countryside demands that certain things are done, and certain things aren't done...if you like, it's a question of style. For instance, large angular buildings where everything's curves and natural shapes...is displeasing and unacceptable. For me personally the intrusion of noisy two stroke engines into the countryside is not in keeping.... Local authorities could perhaps do something educational about how to use the countryside and how not to use it."
>
> Doctor, 37

These perceptions thus appear to be structured by a set of norms indicating what is and what is not appropriate in the countryside. Yet another respondent stated that the countryside was important because she "had been brought up for it to be important". This highlights the importance of countryside socialisation: learning and developing certain value patterns, and related interests, through the family or peer group.

Differing perceptions of the countryside may influence overall patterns of visiting, through the action of constraints operating to block those factors or opportunities perceived as necessary to a satisfactory experience. For instance, one respondent stated:

> "I used to visit [the country] regularly, but now that my family's all grown up, and we've no car any more, we just don't go now. I'd like to go again, because I used to enjoy it so much before."
>
> Middle-aged woman

The lack of a car, as a constraint on visiting the countryside, is a well known factor. The survey area, on the southern perimeter of the city, is adjacent to the Pentland Hills, an extensive area of

open country which is designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value, and has been the subject of proposals to establish both a country park and a regional park. The respondent, quoted immediately above, lived in that part of the study area on the city boundary. No part of this housing area is more than two kilometres from the city boundary, and much of it is considerably closer. It may thus be inferred that this particular respondent has a significantly different perception of what constitutes a countryside experience from those other respondents in the area who, irrespective of whether they own cars or not, stated that they visited the Pentland Hills area. Thus for some individuals the drive is perceived to be the most important aspect of the countryside experience, whereas for others it assumes a lesser significance.

**Conclusion**

As indicated at the start of this chapter, the aim behind the collection of qualitative data has been twofold. First, it was intended to establish the nature and variety of basic concepts used by individuals to describe the countryside and its use for recreation. The information presented in the preceeding pages documents these concepts and opinions. Secondly, the qualitative data has been used to design the main questionnaire, as described in Chapter Nine. The information obtained about places visited in the countryside, recreation activities, satisfactions gained from, perceptions of, and attitudes towards the countryside has been used in the construction of the respective checklist and attitude items. The words and phrases used by respondents have also been retained

in the questionnaire, so that wording and content of the checklists and attitude statements reflected everyday language. The questionnaire could not have been successfully designed without this basic information.

In these respects the qualitative data has proved to be of considerable value. More detailed analyses of the results, such as measurement of frequency of responses, cross-tabulation or classification, have not been attempted: classification and measurement are, strictly speaking, the preserve of the quantitative approach and these methods of analysis will be employed in the following section of the project. Furthermore, the data were not collected with such aims in mind. The small number of interviews (20) and the variable quality of the data preclude any more detailed analysis. The response varied from incomplete and limited answers to highly detailed descriptions of behaviour and opinion, and thus any attempt at classification would have been based on incomparable data. It was not possible to obtain data which could be used for the purpose of comparison, since the aim of the in-depth interviews was to allow respondents to talk at length, rather than to answer specific questions in a structured way. Moreover, the technique was more successful with some respondents than with others. Some people were more willing to talk at length and express themselves in detail, and these respondents provided more information than those whose answers tended to be limited to one word and who did not wish to, or were unable to, discuss the reasons behind their attitudes and behaviour. There is, however, no evidence to indicate that the more articulate individuals were

different, in terms of age, education or social status, from those others with whom the depth interview technique was less successful.

These limitations of the qualitative data have been the main factors which have dictated the way in which it has been used. A further use for the data, though of secondary importance, will be the illustration and illumination of the quantitative results which are presented in the following chapters.

Although the aim of this chapter has been to present the countryside recreation experience in terms of the qualitative, idiosyncratic and varied perceptions of individuals, a brief summary of the most important elements is appropriate here. Passive, informal activities make up the majority of recreation pursuits, a widely known fact. The range of places liked is wide, and whereas, for some people, preference depends on the degree of use or provision of facilities, for others it does not. The contrast between town and country is very important in perception of the countryside and so too are notions of rest and relaxation, ecape from pressure, peace and quiet, fresh air, health, social or family considerations, freedom and the scenery. The family group is of considerable significance in determining the nature of activities in the countryside. Finally, attitudes towards provision for recreation in the countryside vary and some individuals hold opinions concerning appropriate behaviour in the countryside.

These, then, appear to be the main aspects of people's perceptions of the countryside recreation experience. The relative importance of any one aspect cannot however be judged from these accounts; and

because of the small number of interviews it may also be possible that some aspects of the recreation experience have been omitted. Notwithstanding these limitations, these qualitative accounts are presented here as a picture of the complex variety of experiences which comprise the phenomenon known as countryside recreation. In the following chapters an attempt will be made to examine this variety of experience in much greater detail, in order to identify and describe any structure which might exist within the overall complexity.

## 12: Behaviour in the countryside

This chapter and the two that follow present the results of analysis of the data obtained from the main questionnaire. The data relating to the behavioural variables are examined in this chapter, the following chapter is concerned with analysis of the questions dealing with reasons for visiting the countryside and attitudes towards recreation in the countryside, and analysis of the perceptual data is presented in chapter fourteen.

As explained earlier, the analysis was intended to be inductive and exploratory, with the ultimate goal of identifying groups in the sample comprising people who are similar in their attitudes to, and behaviour in, the countryside, and who are also similar in terms of some other social characteristics. As a result of this exploratory aim and because of the emphasis placed on that part of the analysis concerned with multivariate techniques, the size of the sample does not allow conclusions to be drawn which could confidently be applied to the larger population. Table 12.1 shows the sampling error for a sample of 81: the chances are 95 in 100 that the percentage estimated by the survey lies within a range equal to the observed percentage plus or minus the number of percentage

Table 12.1 Standard error* of a percentage

| | Percentage observed in sample | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sample size | 50 | 40 or 60 | 30 or 70 | 20 or 80 |
| 81 | ±11.6% | ±11.4% | ±10.7% | ±8.9% |

* Formula for standard error: $\frac{p(p-1)}{n}$ (Moser and Kalton, 1971)

points in the table (Moser and Kalton, 1971). An error of plus or minus approximately 10 percent thus accompanies any percentage from the sample.

In view of this limitation it has been decided to present cross-tabulated relationships only where a series of similar or related variables shows a relationship with a particular socio-economic indicator. This will provide a safeguard in that a series of relationships between similar aspects of cognition or behaviour and one particular independent variable is less likely to be based on chance occurrences than a single relationship with a high degree of sampling error. This is therefore a kind of 'multi-operationalism' which is intended to act as an extra check on the reliability of the data. As a result of this policy, and also on account of the constraints of space, a number of individual relationships between behavioural or cognitive variables, and socio-economic characteristics have not been reported. Attention has thus been concentrated on those variables which display consistent relationships, and only where these appear repeatedly with similar sets of behavioural or cognitive variables. Owing to the large number of variables involved in the analysis, negative findings have not been reported in the text. The level of significance of the chi-square statistic has been reported in the tables where this exceeds 10 percent, and also in the text where this exceeds 5 percent.

Furthermore, the nature and direction of the relationship expected with each independent variable will be postulated in advance. Al-

though formal hypothesis testing is not intended because of the research design and consequent sampling error, some guidelines must be used in an inductive effort if coherent sense is to be made from a mass of data (Everitt, 1977).

**The indicator variables**

The socio-economic and physical indicator variables which were used in this study were presumed from the literature to be related to behaviour in, attitudes towards, and perceptions, of countryside recreation. They were as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| age | stage in the family lifecycle |
| sex | residence in the country as a child |
| car ownership/access | previous residence in country as adult |
| occupational status | frequency of visiting country as child |
| educational attainment | holday taking in country as child |

Measurement of most of these variables is self explanatory, but a few require comment. Age was split into three groups as follows: 14 to 29, 30 to 54, and 55 plus. Since visiting the country is, in considerable part, a family activity, the views of younger people are as worthy of consideration as those of older individuals, and hence a lower age limit than is common in similar household surveys was used. The three age categories correspond broadly with the three main stages of the lifecycle: single, child rearing, and post child rearing. The variable for the family lifecycle measured this factor in greater detail, using five categories: the three age groups given above for single people or childless couples, together with two categories, one for those people with children under the age of ten, and one for those with the youngest child aged ten

years and over. Other surveys use a wider classification to separate out the effects of married status, but owing to the small size of the sample the number of categories of each variable had to be kept to a minimum. It was expected, from theoretical discussion of the family life cycle (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1975), that younger people would be more likely to seek sociable activities and more active pursuits; that those respondents with young children would be preoccupied with suitable activities for family participation; and older respondents would tend to be less involved in those aspects of leisure behaviour, seeking instead more passive and leisurely pursuits.

Occupational status was determined from the Registrar General's Standard Classification of Occupations. The five-fold grouping of occupational classes (I to V) represents, respectively, professional and managerial, intermediate, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled occupational groups. Osborn and Morris (1979) have pointed out that this classification is not an entirely adequate measure of social stratification. They also note, however, that considerable difficulties are involved in devising a more accurate categorisation, and therefore the Registrar General's Standard Classification has been used as the most effective surrogate of social class available. Occupational status groups IV and V were combined into one group because of the small size of the sample, as were the manual and non-manual components of group III. It has been shown that occupational status groups I and II are over-represented among visitors to the countryside while those in groups IV and V are under-represented (Fitton, 1978; Duffield, 1982;

Sidaway, 1982a). It was expected that this pattern would be reflected both in behaviour in, and attitudes towards, the countryside. It was also expected that the upper occupational groups would be more likely to hold values consistent with the traditional ideology of countryside recreation since elite values are likely to be diffused through specific channels to particular social groups.

Educational attainment was determined by the age at which full time education was completed and was divided into three categories: education to minimum leaving age only; completion of school education only; and further education. Those few respondents who were in full time education when they were interviewed were allocated to one of the two latter groups, depending on whether they were still at school or in further education. The effect of education on the dependent variables was expected to parallel that of occupational class, with those respondents who had a higher level of educational attainment showing a greater acceptance of traditional values.

The variable for car ownership and access was based on whether the respondent owned a car, or had regular and dependable access to a car (for instance a wife to a husband's car), or neither. Car ownership has been shown to be an important indicator of propensity to visit the country (Elson, 1977a; Duffield, 1982) and it was expected that this pattern would be reflected in increased acceptance of traditional attitudes and behaviour patterns among car owners. Experience of the countryside as a child through frequent visiting, holiday taking or residence in the country has also been

found to be a predictor of countryside visiting (Fitton, 1979) and it was expected that such a form of socialisation would influence acceptance of traditional recreation values. A longer period of exposure to the countryside in childhood and the consequent likelihood of socialisation into modes of appropriate behaviour imply a greater adherence to the values of the traditional ideology of countryside recreation.

**Behaviour in countryside recreation**

Table 12.2 presents the frequency of response to the checklist type questions on behaviour in the countryside, in terms of the types of places visited and the activities undertaken. It should be borne in mind that the response reflects the respondents' perceptions of these places so that the numbers of people who say they visit 'nature reserves' and 'country parks' for instance may not accord with the precise numbers who actually do visit these places. Also, since the question was based on the kind of activities the respondent 'usually' did or, in the case of those respondents who did not visit the country but expressed a desire to do so, the activities they would 'like to do', the figures may be an over-estimation of the actual frequency of participation. It may however be assumed that these figures represent approximate 'client' groups, in the sense of relative popularity for each place visited and activity undertaken. It must be stressed that, because of the size of the sample, the figures are not presented as representative of the population but rather as indicative of the general variation within the sample; generalisations may be made about the population but only with reference to the errors

Table 12.2 Sample size=81
Frequency of response* to countryside activities inventory

| Places visited | Percentage of respondents |
|---|---|
| Open country | 84 |
| Country villages | 79 |
| The beach (countryside coast) | 68 |
| Places of historical interest (castles, monuments etc) | 63 |
| Country pubs | 59 |
| Fairs, markets and other country events | 58 |
| Parklands and gardens in the country | 54 |
| Country parks | 54 |
| Nature trails | 40 |
| Wildlife and safari parks | 40 |
| Nature reserves | 38 |
| Farms | 35 |
| Stately homes | 32 |
| Sporting events in the country | 14 |
| **Activities** | |
| Go for a short walk | 85 |
| Picnic | 76 |
| Relax and do nothing | 69 |
| Go for a long walk | 59 |
| Visit teashops or restaurants | 59 |
| Visit friends and relatives | 52 |
| Play informal games (eg ball games, kite flying etc) | 47 |
| Go boating/go on a boat trip | 26 |
| Go camping | 21 |
| Take part in active sports | 19 |
| Nature study/birdwatching | 15 |
| Fishing | 12 |
| Cycling | 12 |
| Watch sports | 12 |
| Horse riding/pony trekking | 7 |

* Respondents were asked to indicate which activities and places they 'usually' visited on a trip to the countryside. Those who did not visit the country but expressed a desire to do so were asked to say what sort places they would like to visit, and the sort of activities they would like to do.

presented in Table 12.1.

These results are in general unsurprising (see for instance Duffield and Owen, 1970; Elson, 1977a; TRRU, 1977 and Fitton, 1979 for broadly comparable data). The relative popularity of country

parks is, however, notable, although it must be remembered that respondents were free to define 'country park' as they wished. There are only four local authority country parks in the vicinity of Edinburgh, whereas there are a considerable number of rival countryside attractions.

Secondly, the significance of fairs, markets and other similar country events is demonstrated by the popularity of these countryside trip destinations. The results for countryside recreation activities clearly show the well-known distinction between what are, perhaps misleadingly, termed 'active' and 'passive' activities. A more accurate distinction would be between the popular, 'informal' activities, and the relatively less popular 'intensive' activities requiring a greater degree of equipment, preparation or skill. One finding of particular interest may be noted. Almost 70 percent of the sample said they usually 'relax and do nothing' on a visit to the countryside. Despite the sampling error associated with this percentage, the relative importance of this activity (or inactivity) is clear.

The importance of age in relation to recreation behaviour in the countryside can be seen from Table 12.3. The relationships in this table are all significant at the 5 percent level, and five (visiting the beach, cycling, playing sports, informal games and camping) are also significant at the 1 percent level. This indicates that the relationship between age and recreational behaviour is both consistent and strong. Most of these relationships require little explanation; it is notable however

Table 12.3 Recreational behaviour in the countryside by age of respondent (n = 81)

| Places visited and activities | | Age of respondent 14-29 | 30-54 | 55+ | significance level |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | |
| Country pubs | visited | 43 | 38 | 19 | 0.0110 |
| | not visited | 18 | 33 | 48 | |
| Parklands and gardens | visited | 37 | 23 | 40 | 0.0300 |
| | not visited | 27 | 51 | 22 | |
| Country parks | visited | 36 | 43 | 20 | 0.0478 |
| | not visited | 27 | 27 | 46 | |
| Beach, coast | visited | 40 | 38 | 22 | 0.0098 |
| | not visited | 15 | 31 | 54 | |
| Visit people | done | 33 | 24 | 43 | 0.0352 |
| | not done | 31 | 49 | 20 | |
| Cycling | done | 80 | 20 | -- | 0.0021 |
| | not done | 26 | 39 | 36 | |
| Watch sports | done | 70 | 10 | 20 | 0.0226 |
| | not done | 27 | 40 | 33 | |
| Play sports | done | 73 | 27 | -- | 0.0040 |
| | not done | 23 | 38 | 39 | |
| Informal games | done | 45 | 42 | 13 | 0.0021 |
| | not done | 21 | 30 | 49 | |
| Camping | done | 76 | 24 | -- | 0.0000 |
| | not done | 20 | 39 | 41 | |
| Horse riding pony trekking | done | 83 | 17 | -- | 0.0179 |
| | not done | 28 | 37 | 35 | |
| Sample totals | | 32 | 36 | 32 | |

that country parks attract primarily those in the 30 to 54 age group. This would appear to reflect the importance of this type of recreation facility for families with children. Similarly, informal games are most popular among the two lower age groups, while those in the 55 plus age group are more likely to visit people and parklands and gardens.

These findings are supported by cross-tabulation with the lifecycle variable (Table 12.4). The popularity of the country park and the beach or 'countryside coast' for families with the youngest child under ten is clearly seen from this table, and the former relationship is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Informal games (not surprisingly) are very popular for those with children (this relationship significant at the 1 percent level), while there is obviously less opportunity for the same respondents to 'relax and do nothing'.

Car ownership has long been acknowledged as an important indicator of propensity to visit the countryside, but the importance of this variable diminishes when countryside recreation is disaggregated into its various component activities. Table 12.5 shows that few of the recreation activities or destinations varied according to car ownership in the manner expected. The increased likelihood of car owners visiting country pubs and sporting events (the latter significant at 5 percent) does not require further comment, but the finding that wildlife and safari parks were most popular with those who did not own cars (significant at 1 percent) is of some interest. Fitton (1978) found a similar relationship, in that people in the lower occupational groups tended to be more likely to visit safari parks. It may be that, since wildlife and safari parks are something of a rarity, they tend to be the object of holiday visits or outings on special occasions and thus may attract a higher proportion of non car owners.

Table 12.4 Recreational behaviour by position of respondent in the lifecycle (n = 81)

| Places and activities | | Single or married with no children | | | children u/10 | children o/10 | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | | | |
| Country parks | visited | 30 | 16 | 14 | 27 | 13 | 0.0500 |
| | not visited | 24 | 8 | 30 | 8 | 19 | |
| Beach | visited | 33 | 14 | 18 | 22 | 13 | 0.1000 |
| | not visited | 15 | 8 | 42 | 11 | 23 | |
| Relax and do nothing | done | 27 | 9 | 30 | 16 | 18 | |
| | not done | 28 | 20 | 16 | 24 | 12 | |
| Informal games | done | 34 | 11 | 11 | 34 | 11 | 0.0027 |
| | not done | 21 | 14 | 40 | 5 | 21 | |
| Sample totals | | 27 | 12 | 26 | 18 | 16 | |

Table 12.5 Recreational behaviour by car ownership (n = 81)

| Places and activities | | Car ownership: car owner | access to car | no car | motor cycle | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | | |
| Country pubs | visited | 43 | 36 | 19 | 2 | 0.0675 |
| | not visited | 33 | 18 | 46 | 3 | |
| Sporting events | visited | 64 | 27 | -- | 9 | 0.0442 |
| | not visited | 35 | 29 | 35 | 1 | |
| Wildlife and safari parks | visited | 19 | 41 | 41 | -- | 0.0095 |
| | not visited | 52 | 21 | 23 | 4 | |
| Open country | visited | 43 | 28 | 28 | 2 | |
| | not visited | 15 | 31 | 46 | 8 | |
| Relax and do nothing | done | 29 | 34 | 36 | 2 | 0.0431 |
| | not done | 60 | 16 | 20 | 4 | |
| Informal games | done | 26 | 37 | 32 | 5 | 0.0804 |
| | not done | 49 | 21 | 30 | -- | |
| Sample totals | | 38 | 28 | 31 | 2 | |

The fact that car owners were over-represented among those visiting the open countryside and non car owners under-represented is again unsurprising; but the finding that those who played 'informal games' and 'relaxed and did nothing' (the latter significant at the 5 percent level) tended not to be car owners is rather surprising. The latter activity was popular among non car owners and those with only access to a car, but this pattern was not as clearly apparent among those who played informal games.

No relationship was found between recreational behaviour in the countryside and occupational status, a somewhat surprising finding in the light of the evidence which shows occupational status to be an important indicator of propensity to visit the countryside

Table 12.6 Recreational behaviour by educational attainment of respondent (n = 81)

| Places and activities | | Education of respondent minimum school | further | | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | |
| Nature trails | visited | 31 | 41 | 28 | 0.0159 |
| | not visited | 63 | 18 | 18 | |
| Nature study | done | 33 | 58 | 8 | 0.0288 |
| | not done | 53 | 22 | 25 | |
| Nature reserves | visited | 47 | 33 | 20 | |
| | not visited | 52 | 24 | 24 | |
| Sample totals | | 51 | 28 | 22 | |

(Duffield, 1982; Sidaway, 1982a). Table 12.6 shows the effects of education on three of the behavioural variables; no relationships appeared between education and any of the other behavioural variables. From this table we can see that while there appears to

be a direct and increasing relationship between education and visiting nature trails, only those who completed school education are over-represented among those who participate in nature study (both these relationships significant at 5 percent) and no particular relationship exists between education and visiting nature reserves. Everett (1979) found a small positive relationship between wildlife interests, nature study activities and occupational status and income, but the present results are inconclusive on this point.

Differences between male and female respondents are presented in Table 12.7 and appear to reflect some basic differences of interests related to the sex roles: men are more likely to play sports whereas women appear to be more interested in visiting fairs, markets and similar events (significant at 5 percent), farms and teashops. Table 12.8 shows the effect of adult and child residence in the country on the variables 'visiting people' and 'visiting farms' (the former significant at 1 percent). These relationships are entirely expected; what is of interest, however, is that residence in the country either as adult or child, together with the other variables measuring countryside socialisation, namely the frequency of visiting the countryside as a child and whether holidays were taken in the country as a child, did not show a relationship with any of the other behavioural variables. Thus it appears that, while countryside socialisation may increase the likelihood of visiting the countryside (Fitton, 1979), it does not appear to have any effect on patterns of recreational behaviour in the countryside.

Table 12.7 Recreational behaviour by sex of respondent (n = 81)

| Places and activities | | Sex of respondent: Male (Percentage of respondents) | Female (Percentage of respondents) | significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fairs, markets etc | visited | 40 | 60 | 0.0139 |
| | not visited | 71 | 29 | |
| Farms | visited | 39 | 61 | |
| | not visited | 60 | 40 | |
| Play sports | done | 73 | 27 | |
| | not done | 48 | 52 | |
| Visit teashops | done | 46 | 54 | |
| | not done | 64 | 36 | |
| Sample totals | | 53 | 47 | |

Table 12.8 Recreational behaviour by residence in the country as adult or child (n = 81)

| Places and activities | | Residence in the country as child: Yes (Percentage of respondents) | No (Percentage of respondents) | significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Visit people | done | 43 | 57 | 0.0023 |
| | not done | 10 | 90 | |
| Sample totals | | 27 | 73 | |
| | | Residence in country as adult: Yes (Percentage of respondents) | No (Percentage of respondents) | |
| Farms | visited | 36 | 63 | 0.0852 |
| | not visited | 17 | 83 | |
| Sample totals | | 24 | 76 | |

Table 12.9 shows the effects of score on the attitude scales on recreational behaviour. The relationships that do exist are quite clear: visiting pubs, fairs/markets (Scale 2 significant at 5 percent), wildlife and safari parks (Scale 1 significant at 5

Table 12.9 Recreational behaviour by score on attitude scales (n=81)

| Places visited and activities | | Score on attitude scales: Scale 1 low | Scale 1 med | Scale 1 high | significance | Scale 2 low | Scale 2 med | Scale 2 high | significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | | | | | |
| Nature reserves | yes | 27 | 36 | 45 | | 27 | 21 | 58 | 0.0061 |
| | no | 73 | 64 | 55 | | 73 | 79 | 42 | |
| Country pubs | yes | 82 | 52 | 60 | | 80 | 58 | 48 | |
| | no | 18 | 48 | 40 | | 20 | 42 | 52 | |
| Country parks | yes | 73 | 44 | 70 | 0.0599 | 73 | 39 | 61 | 0.0586 |
| | no | 27 | 56 | 30 | | 27 | 61 | 39 | |
| Fairs, markets | yes | 73 | 58 | 50 | | 87 | 52 | 52 | 0.0450 |
| | no | 27 | 42 | 50 | | 13 | 48 | 48 | |
| Wildlife safari parks | yes | 54 | 46 | 15 | 0.0310 | 53 | 46 | 27 | |
| | no | 46 | 54 | 85 | | 47 | 54 | 73 | |
| Beach, coast | yes | 73 | 68 | 65 | | 87 | 70 | 58 | |
| | no | 27 | 32 | 35 | | 13 | 30 | 42 | |
| Picnic | yes | 100 | 80 | 55 | 0.0110 | 100 | 79 | 64 | 0.0207 |
| | no | -- | 20 | 45 | | -- | 21 | 36 | |
| Nature study | yes | 9 | 14 | 20 | | 7 | 12 | 21 | |
| | no | 91 | 86 | 80 | | 93 | 88 | 79 | |

percent), the beach and picnicking (the latter significant on both scales at 5 percent) are all related to a low score. On the other hand, visiting nature reserves (Scale 2 significant at 1 percent) and nature study are positively related to a high score. It is particularly interesting that a significant proportion of those who went on picnics (one of the most popular activities) tended to score low on both attitude scales. (The first scale was an overall scale measuring attitudes which either supported or were opposed to 'traditional' recreation values, while the second scale specifically measured individual attitudes to other people in the country.)

It may be concluded from this table therefore that traditional attitudes appear to have some effect on behaviour and that this effect operates in the hypothesized direction. Those scoring high on the scales are more likely to participate in activities which require close contact with the natural environment. As noted in Chapter Eight, however, the nature of close contact with the natural environment and natural values varies from person to person, and such experiences may equally be obtained through different activities. The discussion will return to these questions later, in Chapter Fifteen, since these particular problems of interpretation are central to the assumptions made about what people want to do in the countryside.

**Results of multivariate analysis**

Two multivariate techniques were used separately, namely multidimensional scaling and cluster analysis. The particular algorithms chosen for the analysis were the Minissa program from the MDS(X) package (Program Library Unit, 1977; Lingoes and Roskamm, 1973), and the five recommended methods of cluster analysis in the Clustan Manual (Wishart, 1977). The use of this type of analysis was partly very successful, and partly less so. Nevertheless it is felt that useful conclusions can be drawn from all the results.

Figure 12.1 shows a multidimensional scaling plot of variables by people for the checklist of places visited in the countryside. If any two variables are close together, then they will tend to have been scored by the same respondents: in other words if two places

are close together then they will be visited by the same people. The converse applies: if two variables are far apart each will have a different set of visitors. Of course it is not expected that differences will be as clearcut as this; random differences in individual variation are likely to obscure any patterns to a greater or lesser degree. This also depends on the number of data points in the sample, whether variables or respondents: the larger the sample, the greater the amount of individual variation or 'noise' which will obscure the underlying pattern. Only two-dimensional solutions have been presented since these accounted for the greatest part of the variation, with the third dimension reflecting one of the first two dimensions.

Clusters obtained through cluster analysis have been drawn in. A stable solution was reached at the three-cluster level and this solution is comparable with that obtained through multidimensional scaling. The clusters represent groups of places visited with a similar clientele. It should be stressed at this point that multivariate techniques such as these are not based on inferential statistics and thus cannot strictly be used to make inferences from the sample to the population (Everitt, 1977). The findings from multivariate analysis can only be generalised to the population if they are replicated from different samples.

Three clear groups can be seen in Figure 12.1. The first (1,14,3,13,8,10) contains country villages, open country, country pubs, the countryside coast, country parks and fairs, markets etc. This group would seem to form a cohesive cluster of similar visitor types primarily because of the popularity of the places involved.

Figure 12.1 MDS plot of places in the countryside, by respondents

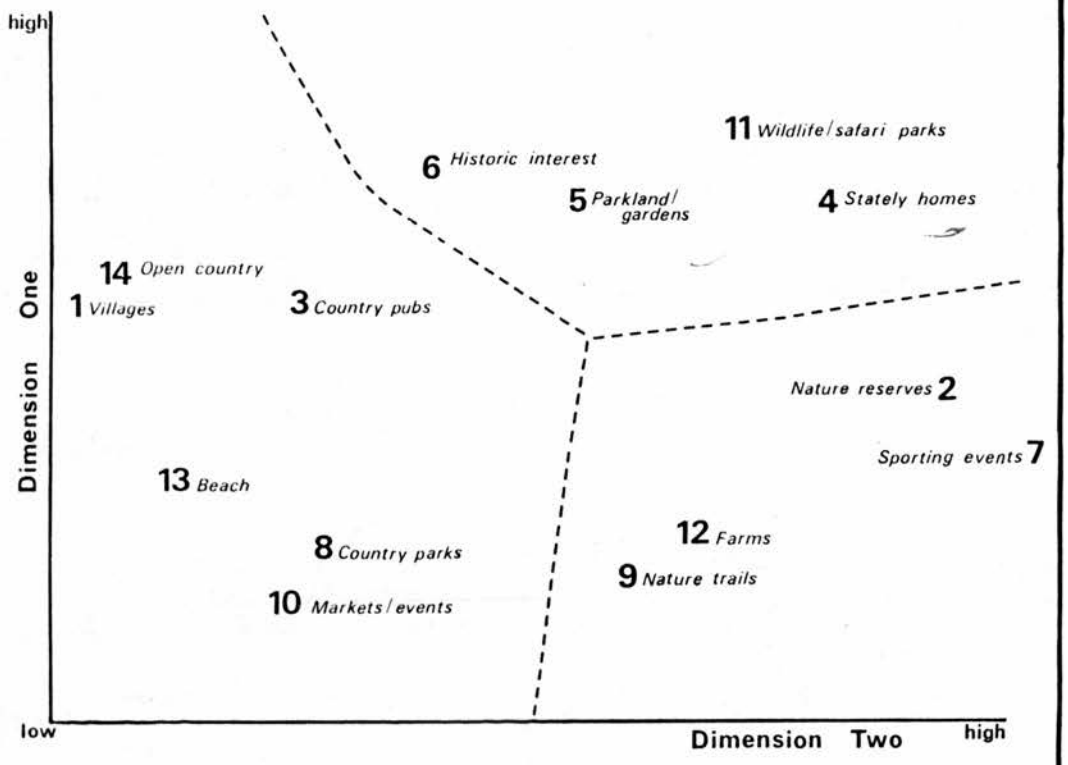
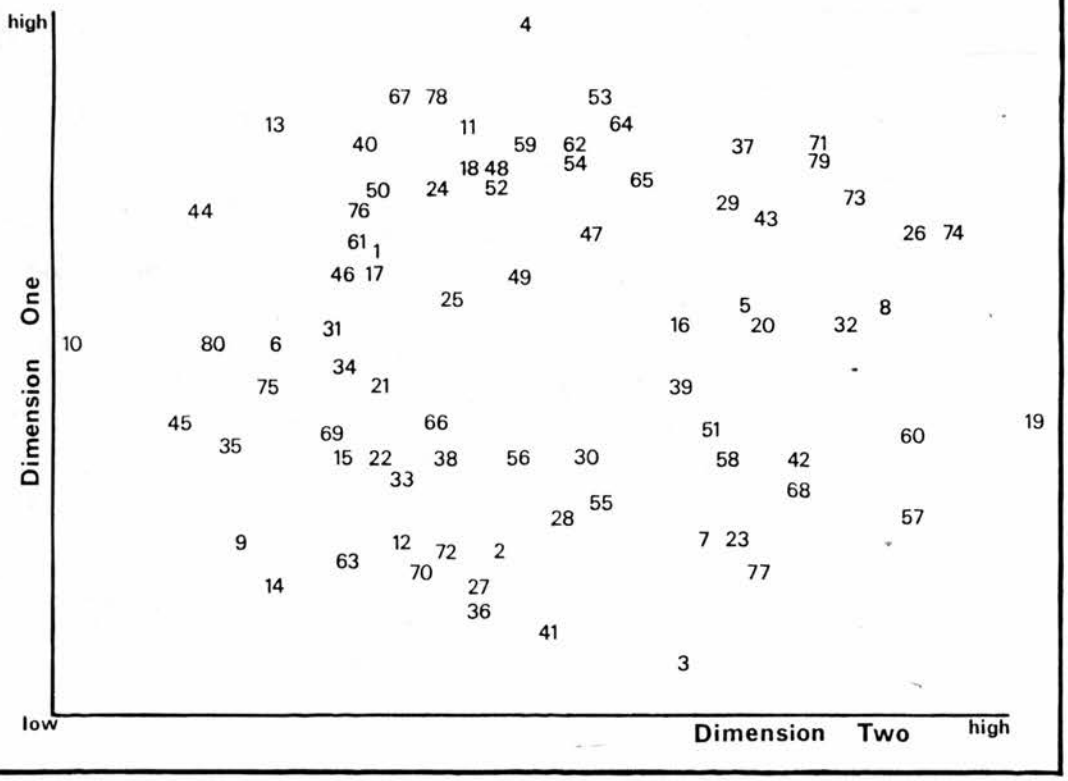



Figure 12.2 MDS plot of respondents, by places in the countryside



These six places constitute six out of the eight most popular places visited, including the most popular three (see Table 12.2). Those places with the greatest number of visitors are likely to have a similar clientele simply because there is a high probability that, if most individuals visit one place, then any one of those individuals will also be a visitor to one of the other places. Variables 6,5,11 and 4 represent places of historic interest, parklands and gardens, wildlife and safari parks and stately homes: these cluster together and thus tend to attract similar visitors. Finally the third group comprises nature trails, nature reserves, sporting events and farms; these places attract a different kind of visitor from the two other groups and can also be differentiated in terms of relative popularity as they are at the lower end of the popularity scale (see Table 12.2). It is, however, clear from the relative positions of the data points that these are not homogenous groups; they only represent places where the clientele of visitors is most similar. The first group can be subdivided into two further groups, on the one hand 1,3 and 14; on the other 13,10 and 8. These were distinguished at an earlier stage of cluster analysis and can easily be seen to be different in the MDS plot. The distinction between these two groups again appears to reflect relative popularity, and it seems possible that the latter group may also reflect family interest.

The dimensions in this MDS plot are not easy to explain. The second dimension appears to be related to relative popularity as measured by the number of people who visited each place: the popularity of each place decreases from left to right along the

dimension. Dimension one is more difficult to understand. It serves to distinguish the second cluster, together with places 1, 14 and 3, from the others but there does not appear to be any common thread linking those places at either pole of this dimension.

The variables relating to the places visited were scaled by the res-pondents in an attempt to identify groups of individuals who were similar in terms of the places they visited and to isolate any particular characteristics those respondents exhibited (Figure 12.2). This was partly unsuccessful because MDS was unable to handle the wide range of variation in the data and because discrete clusters did not appear to exist. Although there is a certain degree of interrelationship between visitors to different places, this appears to take the form of trends rather than discrete groupings and there is considerable between-group similarity as well as within-group similarity which serves to obscure the pattern suggested by Figure 12.1. In other words, although visitors to historic buildings and stately homes are also likely to visit park-lands and wildlife parks, they may also frequently visit other destinations, though not with the same regular pattern as observed in cluster two. Similarly, those who visit nature reserves are also likely to visit nature trails, but again they may visit any of the other destinations, though not as regularly. Thus we are not dealing with clearcut relationships, but with general trends. What is clear from Figure 12.2 is that, excluding the minority with specific recreation interests and requirements, the majority of individuals tend to visit a wide variety of places in the

countryside and no specific clusters of destinations or types of recreation environment can be identified, in terms of either visiting patterns or characteristics of visitors.

Although discrete clusters do not seem to exist in this data set there appear to be dimensions of variation. These can be tentatively explained in terms of the respondents' socio-economic characteristics, but this hypothesis must be regarded with a certain degree of caution since the stress value for the plot is very high: 0.24798 for the two dimensional solution, as compared with the stress value of 0.0785 for the three-dimensional solution for places by respondents shown in Figure 12.1, (see the MDS(X) Manual, Program Library Unit, 1977). A high stress value indicates that the distances between the points in the MDS plot do not correspond very closely with the distances between individuals in the original matrix of dissimilarities. Therefore any change in the position of the points may alter the following dimensional explanation.

Table 12.10 presents a cross-tabulation of position on the two dimensions in Figure 12.2 with the respondents' socio-economic characteristics and their scores on the attitude scales. A high position on dimension one appears to be characterised by a large number of places visited, while those low on dimension one tend to visit a smaller range of places. Those low on the dimension tend to be older, more likely to be male and have higher scores on both the attitude scales (this last being statistically significant at the 5 percent level). Respondents high on the dimension appear to be younger people with lower scores on the attitude scales.

Table 12.10 Socioeconomic characteristics of respondents identified by MDS to be in different positions on dimensions of variation on the MDS scale of people by variables (n=80)

| | Dimension One | | | Dimension Two | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | low | high | signi-ficance | low | high | signi-ficance |
| | Percentage of respondents on each dimension in each socio-economic category | | | | | |
| Male | 61 | 48 | | 59 | 50 | |
| Female | 39 | 52 | | 41 | 50 | |
| 14 to 29 | 22 | 40 | | 26 | 41 | |
| 30 to 54 | 37 | 36 | | 43 | 26 | |
| 55 plus | 41 | 24 | | 31 | 33 | |
| I | 19 | 14 | | 21 | 12 | |
| II | 17 | 25 | | 15 | 29 | |
| III | 25 | 29 | | 28 | 26 | |
| IV and V | 39 | 32 | | 34 | 33 | |
| Car owner | 44 | 34 | | 41 | 35 | |
| No car | 56 | 66 | | 59 | 65 | |
| Minimum education | 59 | 45 | | 54 | 47 | |
| School only | 22 | 31 | | 21 | 35 | |
| Further education | 19 | 24 | | 25 | 18 | |
| Family w/children u/10 | 15 | 20 | | 20 | 15 | |
| No family | 85 | 80 | | 80 | 85 | |
| Low on scale 1 | 14 | 36 | 0.0500 | 28 | 23 | |
| high on scale 1 | 86 | 64 | | 72 | 77 | |
| Low on scale 2 | 19 | 43 | 0.0500 | 35 | 26 | |
| High on scale 2 | 81 | 57 | | 65 | 74 | |

A high position on the second dimension also seems to reflect a larger number of young people while a low position is characterised by a larger number of respondents from the 30 - 54 age group. A high position on dimension two is again characterised by a larger number of places visited; conversely those who were low on this dimension appeared to visit fewer places. However, no clear pattern emerged differentiating specific places on the dimensions.

From this we can tentatively say that younger people and those who score lower on the attitude scales tend to visit a wider variety of places, while older people and those in the 30 - 54 age group are more likely to visit a smaller range of places, as defined in the checklist for this question. This is a tentative conclusion; however it does provide a hypothesis for further research. Although the analysis was partly unsuccessful in this case, it does point to the potential usefulness of multidimensional scaling in a situation such as this where 'tight' clusters do not exist in the data set, but trends or dimensions of variation do.

The plot of activities by respondents is presented in Figure 12.3, with the two cluster solution indicated. A stable solution was reached with both MDS and cluster analysis, and the stress value for the MDS solution was acceptably low (three dimensional solution value 0.04026, two dimensional solution 0.07871). The two groups represent the well-known distinction between the highly popular 'informal' outdoor recreation activities and the more 'intensive' activities in which only a minority participate. The latter group is much more homogenous, indicating that respondents who participated in these activities were the same people. On the other hand the 'informal' activities group is much more widely scattered; those who visit friends and relatives (1) are different from the rest of the group; those who go for long walks (7) are not the same as those who go for short walks (6) and those who take part in informal games (9) are less like the rest of the group.

Figure 12.3 MDS plot of recreation activities, by respondents

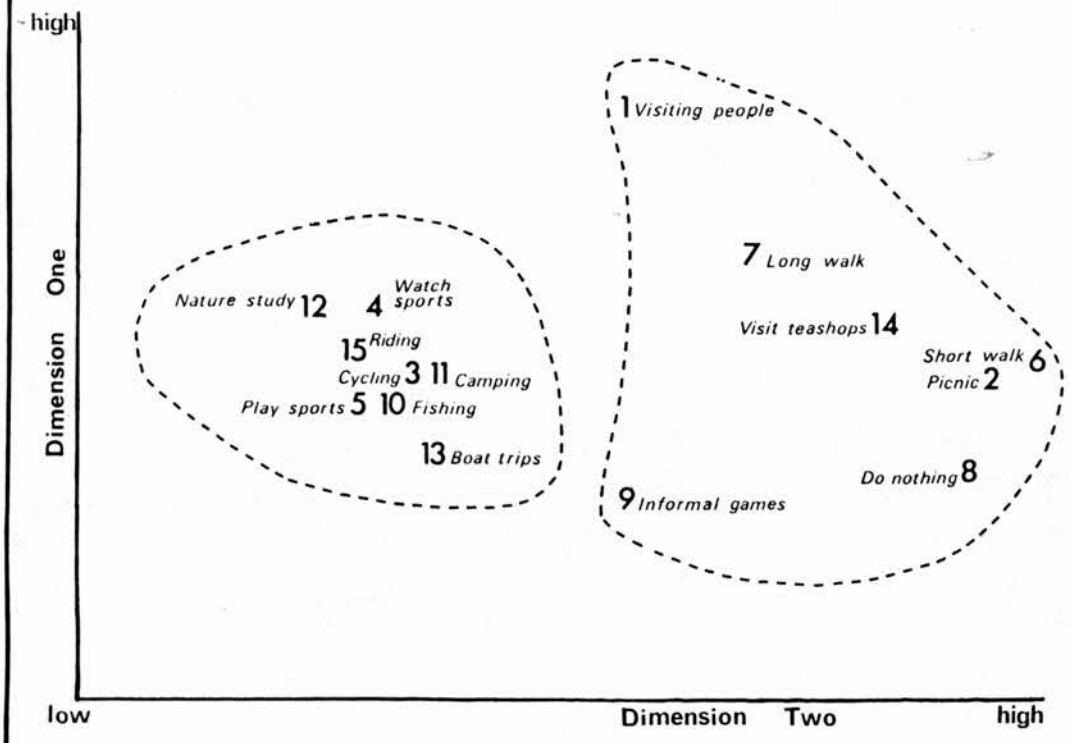
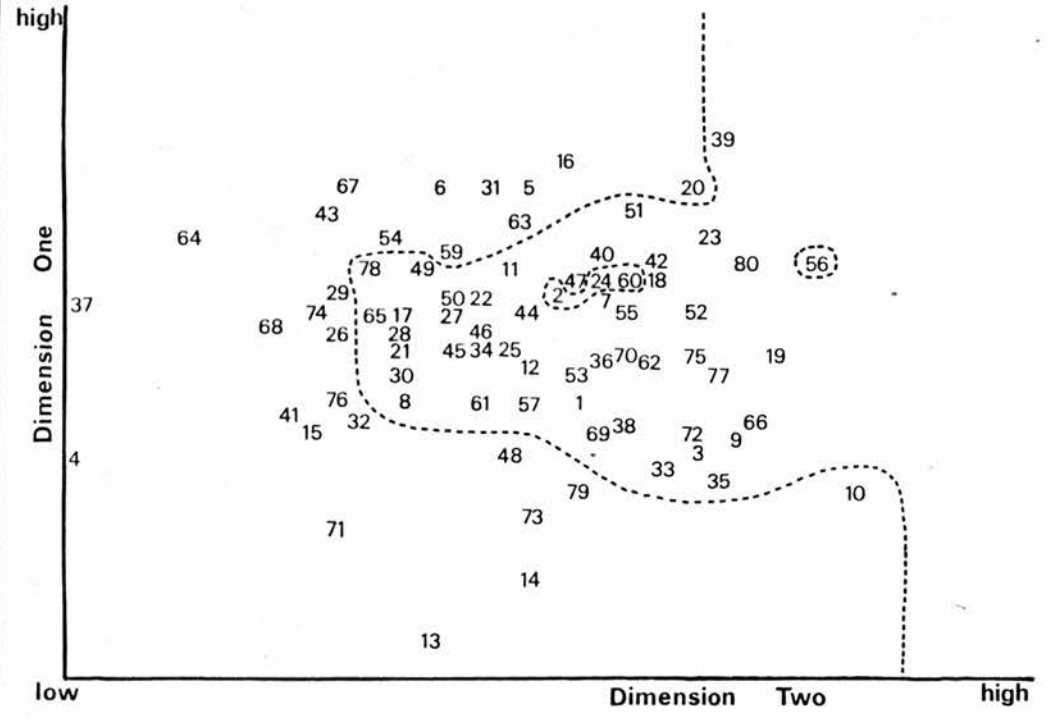



Figure 12.4 MDS plot of respondents, by recreation activities



The plot of people by activities (Figure 12.4), that is, respondents who are similar or different in terms of the activities in which they participated, broadly reflects the informal/intensive division. The stress value is again high (three dimensional solution 0.14046, two dimensional solution 0.20162) and the range of individual variation clearly blurs the simple division between the two groups. Furthermore, cluster analysis did not support the MDS results. The pattern in Figure 12.4 must therefore be treated with caution. The first group (A) is composed of those respondents who participated in only the informal activities and the second group (B) of those who participated in both the informal and the intensive activities. The former group thus participate in a narrower range of countryside recreation activites, while the latter are likely to take part in most, if not virtually all the activities on the list.

From Table 12.11 we can see that the intensive activities group tends to be younger and is over-represented in the 'school education completed' bracket, while the informal activities group tends to be composed of older people, with a tendency to having a lower level of educational attainment. The relationship with age is significant at the 1 percent level, while the relationship with education is significant at the 5 percent level.

Although this finding is not based on a stable multivariate solution it is partly supported by the information presented in Table 12.3 (age and recreation behaviour) and is thus presented as a considered conclusion. The distinction between the informal and

Table 12.11 Socioeconomic characteristics of respondent groups with different patterns of recreational behaviour (activities) identified by MDS (n=80)

| | Both active and passive pursuits | Passive pursuits only | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Percentage of respondents in each socio-economic category | | |
| Male | 56 | 52 | |
| Female | 44 | 48 | |
| 14 to 29 | 57 | 15 | 0.0010 |
| 30 to 54 | 30 | 40 | |
| 55 plus | 13 | 45 | |
| I | 16 | 17 | |
| II | 19 | 23 | |
| III | 19 | 32 | |
| IV and V | 46 | 28 | |
| Car owner | 31 | 44 | |
| No car | 69 | 56 | |
| Minimum education | 34 | 62 | 0.0500 |
| School only | 53 | 25 | |
| Further education | 13 | 13 | |
| Family w/children under 10 | 18 | 18 | |
| No family | 88 | 88 | |
| Low on scale 1 | 32 | 21 | |
| High on scale 1 | 68 | 79 | |
| Low on scale 2 | 39 | 23 | |
| High on scale 2 | 61 | 77 | |

intensive activities groups also serves as a dimensional explanation for the second dimension. Dimension one proved difficult to interpret and an explanation has not been attempted.

**Conclusion**

The disaggregation of recreation behaviour into its component parts shows that age and position in the lifecycle are the most important influences on leisure behaviour in the countryside. Other socio-

economic variables appear to have little influence on what people do when they visit the country, although the importance of car ownership, occupational class and countryside socialisation has long been acknowledged in determining whether or not, and how frequently people actually visit the country. Attitudes to the countryside based on the concept of the traditional ideology of countryside recreation appear to have a certain degree of influence on recreational behaviour.

In the attempt to identify groups of respondents with similar behaviour patterns it emerged that the majority of people are likely to visit a wide range of countryside locations and no discrete groups appeared: the overall similarity in recreational behaviour is the most striking conclusion. It is tentatively suggested that younger people visit a greater number of different places and thus have a wider variety of trip destinations, whereas families with small children or older people are likely not to visit as wide a range of locations. The results of multidimensional scaling only differentiated activities in the countryside along the 'active/passive' (or 'intensive/informal') dimension. There was a tendency for younger people to be more likely to engage in both the 'intensive' and the 'informal' activities, and for older people to only engage in the 'informal' activities, although this last result was only tentative.

## 13: Results of questions on cognition I

The results of analysis of the questions relating to the reasons for visiting the countryside and to the attitudes to recreation in the countryside are presented in this chapter. Again it must be emphasized that, owing to the small size of the sample, the results of cross-tabulation should only be taken as indicative of possible trends and relationships, rather than as confirming these relationships.

The checklist of reasons for visiting the countryside was presented in random order to respondents who were asked to select the six which represented the things they 'liked most' about visiting the countryside. The checklist of items in this question would thus provide information on the respondents' reasons for visiting the countryside, on their motivations, on the needs that recreational use of the country fulfils and on the satisfactions that this provides.

The results of the simple frequencies of response to this checklist are presented in Table 13.1. 'Scenery' and 'peace and quiet' are clearly the most popular reasons, followed by 'fresh air' and 'sense of freedom'. These are general reasons which refer most of all to the 'descriptive' qualities of the countryside experience; more specific reasons related to particular activities or social reasons are very much in the minority. It is clear that, in an absolute sense, these general descriptive reasons are by far the most important, and these results are similar to those found by

Table 13.1 Reasons selected by respondents as contributing most to their enjoyment of visiting the countryside (n=81)

| | Percentage of respondents |
|---|---|
| The scenery (16) | 70 |
| Peace and quiet (2) | 62 |
| Fresh air (5) | 49 |
| Sense of freedom (6) | 44 |
| Relaxation (1) | 36 |
| Exercise (18) | 36 |
| The open spaces (9) | 33 |
| Enjoy driving in the country (14) | 33 |
| Unwind and find the time to think about things (7) | 32 |
| To get out of the city (19) | 27 |
| To recover from the pressures of work (11) | 25 |
| To be with the family (8) | 25 |
| It's nicer in the country than in the city (3) | 25 |
| It's somewhere the children can play freely (13) | 24 |
| A chance to see wildlife (12) | 22 |
| Learning about nature and the countryside (15) | 15 |
| It's a chance to meet other people and make friends (17) | 9 |
| It's something I can do with friends (4) | 6 |

Usher, Taylor and Darlington (1970), Usher and Miller (1974), Everett (1977) and TRRU (1978, 1980a, 1980b). However, it can be argued that, in a relative sense, social and activity reasons were selected by those respondents for whom such reasons are clearly important and, from the point of view of market segmentation discussed earlier, these respondents' reasons are as significant as the more popular reasons. Family reasons, for example, are important to a quarter of the respondents, a finding that points to the importance of the family group in participation in countryside recreation. It is possible that the order of preference may have affected the final choice, in that respondents may have considered some reasons to be far more important than others. Respondents were therefore also asked to rank their chosen reasons in order of preference, but more than half of them stated that they accorded equal preference to all the selected reasons. This finding therefore suggests that the results presented in Table 13.1 are

Table 13.2 Reasons contributing to enjoyment of countryside visits by age. (n=81)

| Reasons | | Age 14--29 | 30--54 | 55plus | count (n) | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | | |
| Be with family | Yes | 20 | 50 | 31 | 20 | |
| | No | 36 | 31 | 33 | 61 | |
| Children can play freely | Yes | 16 | 63 | 21 | 19 | 0.0167 |
| | No | 37 | 27 | 36 | 62 | |
| Enjoy driving in the country | Yes | 33 | 22 | 44 | 27 | |
| | No | 32 | 43 | 26 | 54 | |
| Scenery | Yes | 32 | 28 | 40 | 57 | 0.0259 |
| | No | 33 | 54 | 12 | 24 | |
| Exercise | Yes | 45 | 41 | 14 | 29 | 0.0249 |
| | No | 25 | 33 | 42 | 52 | |
| Learning about nature and the countryside | Yes | 17 | 50 | 33 | 12 | |
| | No | 35 | 33 | 32 | 69 | |
| See wildlife | Yes | 33 | 44 | 22 | 18 | |
| | No | 32 | 33 | 35 | 63 | |
| Something I can do with friends | Yes | 60 | 40 | -- | 5 | |
| | No | 30 | 36 | 34 | 76 | |
| Meet other people | Yes | 43 | -- | 57 | 7 | |
| | No | 31 | 39 | 30 | 74 | |
| Sample totals | | 32 | 36 | 32 | | |

indeed a faithful reflection of what the respondents 'liked most' about visiting the countryside.

This pattern of response showed some interesting variation when the responses were cross-tabulated by socio-economic indicators. Table 13.2 shows the results of cross-tabulation of the responses by age. The row total frequency count (n) has been included in this table as some of the reasons were not selected by a large number of

respondents. A number of these relationships appear to be explicable by position in the lifecycle; for instance, the reasons 'exercise' and 'children play freely' are related to age, and this is significant at the five percent level. The slight preference for 'enjoy driving in the country' among older people, and the relative dislike of this reason by those in the middle age group, would also appear to be related to the presence of young children in the latter group.

Similarly, the increased likelihood of those in the middle age group choosing 'learning about nature and the countryside' again reflects its possible educational value for children. It is particularly interesting that the 30 to 54 age group show a lower preference for 'scenery' (significant at the 5 percent level), considering that this is the most popular reason chosen by the whole sample, and that this reason has been found by other surveys as important (Usher et al., 1970; Usher and Miller, 1974; Everett, 1977; TRRU, 1978a; 1980a; 1980b). It seems likely that respondents in the child-rearing stage of the family lifecycle, when visiting the country, tend to be preoccupied with family activities and thus pay less attention to other aspects of the countryside experience. This suggests that caution should be exercised when assuming that the overall popularity of certain responses indicates their widespread and equal acceptance throughout the population. The overall influence of age on respondents' behaviour (Chapter Twelve) and on their reasons for visiting the country supports such an explanation. Although the number of respondents who gave 'meet other people and make friends' as a reason for visiting the country

Table 13.3 Reasons contributing to enjoyment of visits to the countryside by stage in the lifecycle (n=81)

| Reasons | | single or married without children 14--29 | 30--54 | 55plus | youngest child u/10 | o/10 | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | | | |
| Peace and quiet | Yes | 24 | 14 | 28 | 10 | 24 | 0.0500 |
| | No | 32 | 10 | 23 | 32 | 3 | |
| Be with family | Yes | 10 | 10 | 30 | 50 | -- | 0.0060 |
| | No | 33 | 13 | 25 | 8 | 21 | |
| Children play freely | Yes | 5 | 16 | 21 | 47 | 10 | 0.0124 |
| | No | 34 | 11 | 28 | 10 | 18 | |
| Learning about nature | Yes | 17 | 17 | 33 | 33 | -- | |
| | No | 29 | 12 | 25 | 16 | 19 | |
| Sample totals | | 27 | 12 | 26 | 18 | 16 | |

was too small for any conclusion to be drawn from their characteristics, the emerging pattern appeared to fit the general effect of the family lifecycle: only those too young or too old to be visiting the country as members of family groups are likely to see the countryside as providing opportunities to meet other people.

These results are supported by the data presented in Table 13.3, the results of cross-tabulation of the reasons by lifecycle group. The importance of children in the family group is clearly demonstrated, especially where the youngest child is under ten: 'be with family' and 'children play freely' are significant at the 1 percent and 5 percent levels respectively. Interestingly enough, the second most popular reason, 'peace and quiet', was also quoted much less frequently by those with children under ten, and this relationship was significant at the 5 percent level.

Table 13.4 Reasons contributing to enjoyment of visits to the countryside by car ownership n=81

| Reasons | | car owner | car access | no car | motor-cycle |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | |
| Unwind and think | Yes | 54 | 27 | 19 | -- |
| | No | 31 | 29 | 36 | 4 |
| See wildlife | Yes | 28 | 17 | 50 | 6 |
| | No | 41 | 32 | 25 | 2 |

Other socio-economic variables showed very little relationship with the reasons chosen by respondents. Occupational status and educational attainment showed no clear trends or relationships and car ownership (Table 13.4) likewise did not differentiate respondents in any meaningful or consistent way. Those respondents who chose 'a chance to unwind and think' as one of the things they liked about visiting the country tended to be car owners, but there is no clear explanation for this finding other than it may be a reflection of the more articulate, educated middle class car owners who chose that reason in preference to 'relaxation'. The fact that those who chose the reason 'to see wildlife' tended not to be car owners is more difficult to explain.

The only differences between the sexes are presented in Table 13.5: men were more likely to quote 'relaxation' as something they liked about visiting the country and were considerably more likely to wish to 'develop skills and interests' while visiting the country. The former relationship may be due to the self-perceived sex-role difference between men and women whereby the male sees leisure as more distinct from work, while the female role may not change as

Table 13.5 Reasons contributing to enjoyment of visits to the countryside by sex of respondent (n=81)

| Reasons | | Sex of respondent Male | Female | significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | |
| Relaxation | Yes | 69 | 31 | 0.0566 |
| | No | 44 | 56 | |
| Develop skills and interests | Yes | 100 | -- | |
| | No | 51 | 49 | |
| Sample totals | | 53 | 47 | |

significantly between between home and leisure, and thus between city and countryside.

The effect of attitudes, as measured by the general countryside recreation attitude scale, is shown in Table 13.6. The second scale, which measured attitude to other people merely reflected the trends apparent in Table 13.6 and thus has not been included. Three of the reasons included in the table showed a relationship with a high score on the attitude scale: these are 'sense of freedom', 'open spaces' and 'learning about nature and the countryside' (the first two of these relationships are significant at the 5 percent level). Two of these are among the most popular reasons why the countryside is liked (see Table 13.1) and this suggests that even the most frequently quoted reasons for visiting the countryside may be influenced by the individual's values and attitudes. All the reasons which show a positive relationship with low scores on the attitude scale are social reasons, except for driving and 'it's nicer in the country than in the city' (this last significant at 5 percent). It appears that 'spending the day

Table 13.6 Reasons contributing to enjoyment of visiting the countryside by score on attitude scales (n=81)

| | | Position on scale 1 low | med | high | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | |
| Sense of freedom | Yes | 9 | 54 | 40 | 0.0473 |
| | No | 91 | 46 | 60 | |
| Open spaces | Yes | - | 36 | 45 | 0.0320 |
| | No | 100 | 64 | 55 | |
| Learning about nature and the countryside | Yes | 9 | 12 | 25 | |
| | No | 91 | 88 | 75 | |
| It's nicer in the country than in the city | Yes | 54 | 20 | 20 | 0.0473 |
| | No | 46 | 80 | 80 | |
| Be with the family | Yes | 46 | 18 | 30 | |
| | No | 54 | 82 | 70 | |
| Somewhere the children can play freely | Yes | 36 | 26 | 10 | |
| | No | 64 | 74 | 90 | |
| I can meet other people and make friends | Yes | 27 | 4 | 10 | |
| | No | 73 | 96 | 90 | |
| Enjoy driving in the country | Yes | 54 | 30 | 30 | |
| | No | 46 | 70 | 70 | |

driving' is therefore negatively related to traditional countryside values, while no satisfactory explanation of the latter relationship can be offered. However it may be concluded from Table 13.6 that attitudes appear to have a certain influence on the reasons respondents perceived as contributing to their enjoyment of the countryside.

**Results of multivariate analysis**

A stable solution was found for the multivariate analysis of the reasons chosen by respondents for visiting the countryside. Figure 13.1 shows the multidimensional scaling plot with the two-cluster

Figure 13.1 MDS plot of reasons for visiting the countryside, by respondents

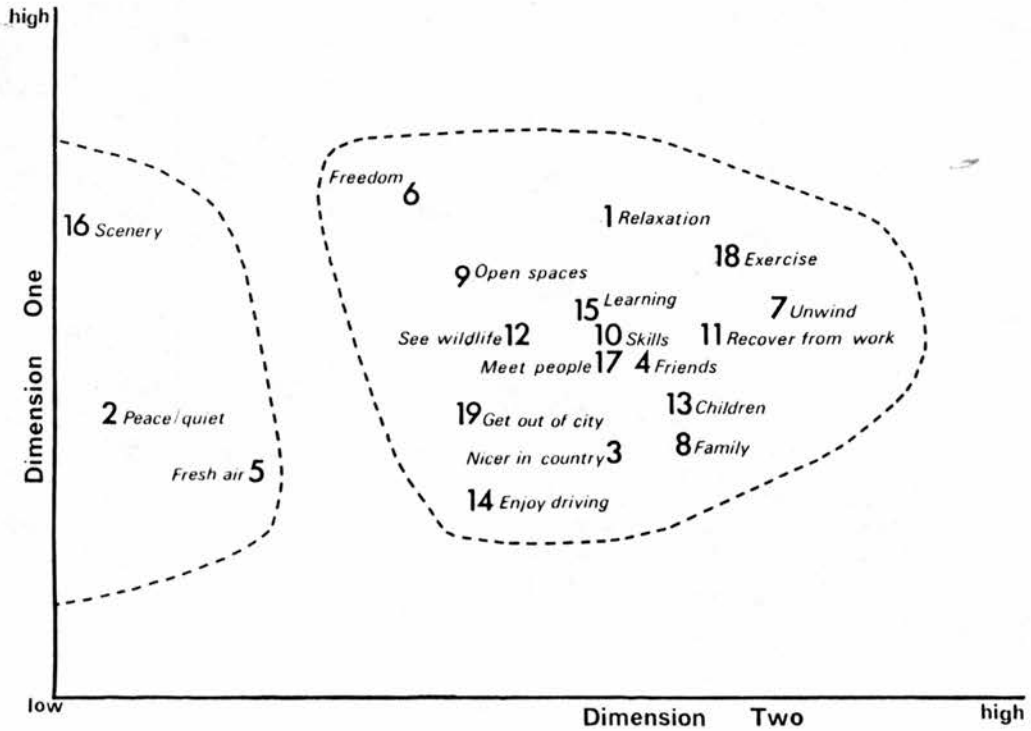
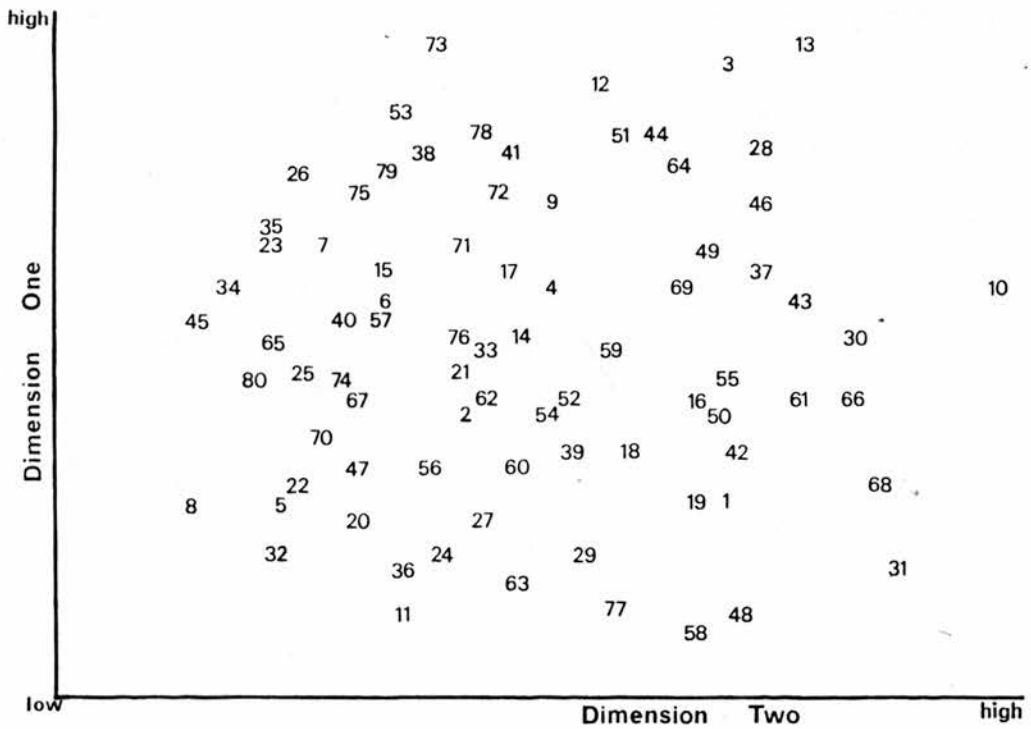



Figure 13.2 MDS plot of respondents, by reasons for visiting the countryside



solution added. Two clear groups emerge, one composed of scenery, peace and quiet, and fresh air (16, 2 and 5) and the other composed of all other reasons.

The main distinction here appears to be between the general descriptive reasons in the first group (these were the three most popular reasons given, see Table 13.1), and the other group which contains the reasons relating to skills, learning, exercise, relaxation, family and social considerations. This dimension (separating these two groups) thus reflects popularity. The learning, social and skills reasons, together with the family reasons ('be with family', 'children play freely') cluster together in a fairly tight group which indicates that those particular reasons were given by a group of the same people. The position of 'sense of freedom' (6) is ambiguous: cluster analysis was unable to assign it to a definite cluster. The first dimension is difficult to interpret: those individuals who quoted reasons 6 (sense of freedom) and 1 (relaxation) were different from those who gave reasons 14 (enjoy driving) and 3 (nicer in the country) but it is difficult to say how. Since the spread of points on this dimension is not excessive, however, it may be concluded that the differences between respondents on this dimension are of lesser significance.

The attempt to scale individual respondents in terms of what they liked about the country (Figure 13.2) was not very successful, again because it appears that individual variation was very high and no clear groups actually exist. No clear or coherent groups could be established through either MDS or cluster analysis. Thus,

of the six reasons any respondent could chose, there were few respondents who had a majority of reasons in common, and thus no clear pattern emerged.

A very tentative pattern of dimensional variation can be identified however: the first dimension, which differentiates the social, skills and learning reasons from the others, has a slightly higher number of young people and males high on the dimension (Table 13.7). Dimension two appears to separate different combinations of the most popular reasons, plus exercise and relaxation. Those respondents low on dimension two appear to be more likely to be found in the lower occupational groups, while those high on this dimension appear to come from the higher occupational groups; this relationship was significant at the 5 percent level (Table 13.7). The explanation for the first dimension is supported by earlier findings (Tables 13.2, 13.5); the interpretation of the second dimension is more speculative.

**The Attitude Statements**

Table 13.8 shows the frequencies of agreement and disagreement with the attitude statements. Statements 4, 9 and 18 did not discriminate be-tween respondents and therefore are of little value in the present en-quiry; while statement 15 showed that 82 percent of the sample did not think that the countryside was crowded. This result, together with the response to statement 18, may be influenced by regional factors: there is relatively good access to countryside in east central Scotland, and one might expect different answers to these questions in south east England, for

Table 13.7 Respondents high and low on dimensions identified by MDS scale of reasons, by socio-economic variables (n=80)

| | Dimension One | | | Dimension Two | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | low | high | signi-ficance | low | high | signi-ficance |
| | Percentage of respondents in each socio-economic category | | | | | |
| Male | 44 | 63 | 0.1000 | 56 | 51 | |
| Female | 56 | 37 | | 44 | 49 | |
| 14 to 29 | 26 | 39 | | 27 | 40 | |
| 30 to 54 | 36 | 36 | | 40 | 34 | |
| 55 plus | 38 | 25 | | 33 | 26 | |
| I | 18 | 15 | | 13 | 20 | 0.0500 |
| II | 20 | 22 | | 11 | 34 | |
| III | 23 | 32 | | 31 | 23 | |
| IV and V | 39 | 32 | | 45 | 23 | |
| Car owner | 36 | 41 | | 36 | 43 | |
| No car | 64 | 59 | | 64 | 57 | |
| Minimum education | 54 | 49 | | 58 | 43 | |
| Only school education | 28 | 27 | | 24 | 31 | |
| Further education | 18 | 24 | | 18 | 26 | |
| Family w/children under 10 | 15 | 20 | | 18 | 17 | |
| No family | 85 | 80 | | 82 | 83 | |
| Low on scale 1 | 31 | 22 | | 27 | 26 | |
| High on scale 1 | 69 | 78 | | 73 | 74 | |
| Low on scale 2 | 36 | 27 | | 29 | 37 | |
| High on scale 2 | 64 | 73 | | 71 | 63 | |

instance.

Apart from these statements, and statements 3, 8, 10, 16 and 19, all the other attitude items discriminated evenly between respondents. These last five statements all produced a very high level of agreement. Statement 3 ('I prefer to find quiet uncrowded places to visit in the country') received overwhelming support, with 87 percent agreeing with it. This suggests that the great

Table 13.8 Frequency of agreement and disagreement with attitude statements (n=81)

| Attitude statements | Disagree 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Agree* 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Percentage of respondents | | | | |
| The most important thing about going to the country is getting close to nature 1 | 22 | 10 | 5 | 30 | 33 |
| I prefer to visit places in the country where there's something provided to attract people 2 | 50 | 21 | 4 | 5 | 20 |
| I prefer to find quiet uncrowded places to visit in the country 3 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 12 | 75 |
| Being in the country soon gets boring 4 | 88 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| When I go for a trip to the country with my family or friends we prefer to get away from other people 5 | 31 | 7 | 9 | 11 | 42 |
| Noisy events and places that attract a lot of people are out of place in country 6 | 31 | 16 | 5 | 6 | 42 |
| There should be a wide variety of things to see and do provided in the country 7 | 49 | 11 | 5 | 6 | 28 |
| I think it's important to go for a walk when you visit the country 8 | 9 | 9 | 5 | 11 | 67 |
| The countryside doesn't interest me 9 | 98 | - | - | - | 2 |
| I think there's a right way and a wrong way to behave in the country 10 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 84 |
| There should be more scope for recreation in the country 11 | 31 | 15 | 22 | 7 | 25 |
| If I go out into the country I prefer to get away from all signs of civilisation, right out into the wild 12 | 27 | 12 | 10 | 22 | 28 |
| I don't think it matters what people do in the country as long as they enjoy their visit 13 | 44 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 37 |
| There's no need for the planners to provide leisure facilities in the countryside 14 | 32 | 16 | 7 | 9 | 36 |

Table 13.8 continued

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| There are too many people visiting the countryside these days 15 | 68 | 14 | 7 | 1 | 10 |
| The country is more interesting than the city 16 | 14 | 4 | 14 | 11 | 58 |
| I like meeting other people when I go out to places in the country 17 | 20 | 14 | 17 | 15 | 35 |
| The countryside is all just farms and fields really, it's difficult finding somewhere to go 18 | 98 | 1 | - | 1 | - |
| I like to visit places in the countryside where there's something interesting to see 19 | 7 | 1 | 7 | 17 | 67 |
| The countryside is for quiet and peaceful recreation only 20 | 37 | 12 | 6 | 10 | 35 |
| I like to spend the day driving around when I visit the country 21 | 36 | 17 | 11 | 5 | 31 |

* Response to the attitude statements was scored on a five point scale as follows: (1) Disagree strongly (2) Disagree a little (3) Neutral or don't know (4) Agree a little (5) Agree strongly

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majority of respondents subscribe to the values of the traditional ideology of countryside recreation. However, on consideration it appears that there are degrees of agreement with these values, and the responses to the other statements bear this out. Fifty percent of the respondents agreed with item 17 ('I like meeting other people when I go out to places in the country') and it seems likely that perception of 'crowding' and 'quietness' depends on a number of factors (Manning and Ciali, 1980) not only on the number of people present; responses to these statements must therefore be treated cautiously. The actual number of people present who determine crowding will vary from person to person, as the concept of relative perception, discussed earlier illustrates.

Statement 20 ('the countryside is for quiet and peaceful recreation only') received an even balance of agreement and disagreement, which suggests an interesting contrast with the response to statement 3. It is possible that the response to the latter was from a personal point of view, while the response to statement 20 was from a general point of view.

However one must also consider the small proportion of respondents (10 percent) who did not agree with statement 3: they did not prefer to find quiet, uncrowded places in the country. This suggests that there exists a minority group with significantly different views and preferences.

In the case of statements 8 and 10 it appears likely that the high frequency of agreement was influenced both by the nature and the wording of the statements. The wording in both cases ('I think it's important to go for a walk when you visit the country' and 'There's a right way and a wrong way to behave in the country') suggests agreement with a normative mode of behaviour. It is possible that, on the part of some respondents, unfamiliarity with appropriate modes of behaviour in the countryside and the effects of conventions and norms such as the country code and related images of the country, combined with the interview situation, led those respondents to agree with those statements, thus producing a higher level of positive response.

This point is supported by the response to statement 13 ('I don't think it matters what people do in the countryside as long as they enjoy their visit') which is basically concerned with the same

concept as statement 10 except that it is worded in a less 'authoritative' or normative fashion, and has been reversed so that the normative response requires disagreement. The fact that 50 percent agreed with this statement while 5 percent disagreed with statement 10 suggests that the two statement were measuring different degrees of this attribute, if not actually measuring different attributes. The correlation between these two items (Pearson r) was a fairly high -.31; thus, although a number of respondents took a consistent view (whether positive or negative) with both statements, others were clearly inconsistent in their attitudes on this point. This interpretation is supported by the results of multivariate analysis presented later in this chapter.

Statement 16 ('the country is more interesting than the city') produced a high degree of affirmative response with 69 percent agreeing. The response to this statement points to the importance of the country for a large number of the respondents as a leisure environment. The high positive response to statement 19 ('I like to visit places in the countryside where there's something interesting to see') is also of interest. The statement was intended to discriminate between those people who perceived a trip to the countryside as organised around a specific place of interest, as opposed to those who considered the countryside in general as of interest. If the statement did in fact measure this attribute, then it appears that a large majority of the sample (84 percent) perceive a day trip to the country as aimed at a specific place of interest and only 8 percent see the countryside as a whole as of interest. This interpretation would appear to underline the

importance of the attraction of a specific destination for the countryside trip, although the result may again be influenced by the nature of regional recreational facilities in the Edinburgh area: it appears that people visiting the countryside in this area do go to specific places (e.g., East Linton, Gullane, Peebles and local country parks were the most popular destinations of respondents in this study).

Although a considerable proportion of the sample (usually around or over 50 percent) agreed with statements reflecting the 'traditional' values of countryside recreation, there was a significant proportion who disagreed with them. For instance, 25 percent agreed with statement 2 ('I prefer to visit places in the country where there's something provided to attract people') compared with 71 percent who disagreed. One third of the sample disagreed with the statement that 'the most important thing about going the country is getting close to nature' while almost two thirds agreed with this statement. A similar proportion (34 percent) thought that 'a wide variety of things to see and do should be provided in the country' while 60 percent disagreed. Almost half disagreed with the statement that 'there's no need for the planners to provide leisure facilities in the countryside' while a similar proportion agreed; and 32 percent agreed that there should be more scope for recreation in the country. These last three statements are of particular interest because they indicate the existence of a demand for recreational provision in the countryside. It may be concluded therefore that a majority of the sample was in agreement with attitudes representing the

'traditional' values of outdoor recreation, but a significant proportion held opposing views.

Some of the attitude statements provide evidence of a greater affinity with traditional countryside recreation values on the part of some of the respondents. As already mentioned, almost two thirds of the sample considered that getting close to nature was the most important thing about visiting the country; 53 percent wanted to get away from other people (statement 5); 48 percent thought that 'noisy events and places that attract a lot of people are out of place in the country'; 34 percent said they did not like meeting other people in the country and 50 percent agreed with the statement 'If I go out into the country I prefer to get away from all signs of civilisation, right out into the wild'.

Taken at face value, the response to these statements shows that two poles of opinion clearly do exist, with respect to attitudes to the use of the countryside for recreation. Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind, as pointed out earlier, that what people define as 'crowded', 'wild' or 'quiet and peaceful recreation' will vary from individual to individual, and these differences will affect the validity of these findings. Furthermore, it is not possible to say from this data whether the two opposing poles of the traditional ideology are relevant for all respondents. Two conclusions may however be drawn with some confidence. First, concepts relating to 'traditional' values of countryside recreation appear to discriminate clearly among the respondents. Second, some of the concepts relating to normative aspects of 'traditional' values appear to evoke more general agreement.

**Cross-tabulation with socio-economic indicators**

The occupational group variable was related to the response to a considerable number of the attitude statements (Table 13.9), unlike the behavioural variables and the reasons for visiting the countryside discussed above. From this table it can be seen that attitude statements concerned with perception of other people, provision of leisure facilities, mode of appropriate behaviour and driving as a leisure activity all tended to vary with occupational group. Three of the statements relating to perception of other people in the countryside showed statistically significant relationships with occupational group (two at the 5 percent, and one at the 1 percent level), and the other two items relating to perception of other people in the countryside also showed a trend in the same direction, though these were not significant. Despite the limitations imposed by sample size, with five similar statements each showing a relationship with occupational group, it appears that there is a stable relationship between attitude to other people in the country and occupational group. It is also apparent from Table 13.9 that the demand for further provision of recreation facilities is concentrated in occupational groups IV and V, with two of the statements concerned with this attitude showing a clear relationship in this direction, although none was significant. Preference for 'spending the day driving around' is also largely confined to occupational groups III, IV and V (and this relationship is significant at the 5 percent level). Those in group I were under-represented in disagreement with statement 1 ('getting close to nature') and those in groups IV and V were over-represented.

Table 13.9 Attitudes to recreational use of the countryside by occupational status of respondent (n=81)

| Attitude statements | | Occupational status I | II | III | IV/V | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | | |
| I like meeting other people when I go out to places in the country (17) | Agree | 2 | 12 | 35 | 50 | 0.0180 |
| | Disagree | 33 | 26 | 22 | 18 | |
| I prefer to find quiet uncrowded places to visit in the country (3) | Agree | 20 | 21 | 28 | 31 | 0.0390 |
| | Disagree | - | - | 38 | 62 | |
| I prefer to visit places where there's something provided to attract people (2) | Agree | - | 15 | 15 | 70 | 0.0050 |
| | Disagree | 22 | 24 | 33 | 21 | |
| I prefer to get away from all signs of civilisation, right out into the wild (12) | Agree | 17 | 20 | 32 | 32 | |
| | Disagree | 12 | 16 | 31 | 41 | |
| There are too many people visiting the country (15) | Agree | 33 | 22 | 22 | 22 | |
| | Disagree | 15 | 23 | 27 | 35 | |
| When I go for a trip...we prefer to get away from other people (5) | Agree | 26 | 21 | 23 | 30 | |
| | Disagree | 6 | 16 | 39 | 39 | |
| The most important thing about visiting the country is getting close to nature (1) | Agree | 22 | 20 | 31 | 28 | |
| | Disagree | 8 | 19 | 27 | 46 | |
| There should be a wide variety of things to see and do provided (7) | Agree | 11 | 21 | 18 | 50 | |
| | Disagree | 20 | 22 | 33 | 24 | |
| There should be more scope for recreation in the country (11) | Agree | 12 | 19 | 23 | 46 | |
| | Disagree | 24 | 19 | 30 | 27 | |
| I don't think it matters what people do in the country (13) | Agree | 11 | 25 | 19 | 44 | |
| | Disagree | 20 | 20 | 34 | 27 | |
| I like to spend the day driving around (21) | Agree | 10 | 3 | 45 | 41 | 0.0317 |
| | Disagree | 23 | 30 | 19 | 28 | |
| Scale 1 | Low | - | 21 | 24 | 55 | 0.0022 |
| | High | 27 | 21 | 31 | 21 | |
| Scale 2 | Low | 3 | 22 | 31 | 44 | 0.0454 |
| | High | 27 | 20 | 27 | 27 | |
| Totals for sample | | 17 | 21 | 28 | 33 | |

The nature of this relationship requires some comment. Agreement with statements 1, 3, and 12 is spread fairly evenly throughout the sample (there is no significant difference between the response from each group and the distribution of these occupational groups in the sample). However, disagreement with these statements is over-represented in occupational groups IV and V, and is under-represented in group I. Statements 7, 11, 13 and 15 show even disagreement throughout the sample. However, in the case of the first three of these, agreement is underrepresented in group I, and over-represented in groups IV and V. Statements 17, 2, 5 and 21 show a two-way trend, with both agreement and disagreement increasing in opposite directions.

If one may assume that this pattern of agreement is not merely a reflection of sampling error, then agreement with traditional values of countryside recreation appears to be spread fairly evenly throughout the population, while disagreement with these values, though occurring in all occupational groups, is concentrated in a social group whose members tend to belong predominantly to occupational groups IV and V.

Occupational groups I and II are also more likely to disagree with attitude statements reflecting opposing values, but they do only show a very slight over-representation in agreement with statements reflecting traditional values. Thus it would appear to be incorrect to conclude that one stratum of society holds a set of values which another stratum does not hold. Rather it appears that, while acceptance of traditional countryside recreation values seems

fairly evenly distributed throughout the population, those in occupational status groups I and II are more likely to disagree with statements opposed to such values, while those in groups IV and V tend to agree with such statements. Therefore it may be concluded, more accurately, that while these values are held fairly evenly throughout the sample, middle-class respondents tend to be more supportive of traditional countryside values and in particular are less likely to subscribe to opposing values, while those who hold values which are different from the traditional attitudes are somewhat more likely to be found in occupational groups IV and V.

The effect of occupational status on acceptance of traditional recreation values is confirmed by cross-tabulation of summed scores on the attitude scales with occupational group. A clear relationship can be seen, in that very few respondents in group I scored low on the attitude scales, while those in group IV and V tended to be over-represented among those who scored low on both scales. This relationship was not as clear among those respondents who scored high on the scales, but in both instances respondents in group I were over-represented on the high scores. The relationship between occupational class and scale 1 was significant at the 1 percent level, and the relationship with scale 2 was significant at the 5 percent level.

Educational attainment showed fewer clear relationships with the attitude statements. Table 13.10 indicates that only statements concerned with perception of other people and the statements concerned with driving, showed a relationship with education, and only statement 17 showed a significant relationship, in this case

Table 13.10 Attitudes towards recreational use of the countryside by educational attainment of respondents (n=81)

| Attitude statements | | Level of educational attainment: minimum | school | further | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | |
| I prefer to visit places where there's something provided to attract people (2) | Agree | 70 | 15 | 15 | signi- |
| | Disagree | 43 | 33 | 24 | ficance |
| When I go for a trip...we prefer to get away from other people (5) | Agree | 51 | 23 | 26 | 0.0749 |
| | Disagree | 55 | 36 | 10 | |
| I prefer to get away from all signs of civilisation (12) | Agree | 58 | 22 | 20 | |
| | Disagree | 47 | 41 | 12 | |
| I like meeting other people when I go to places in the country (17) | Agree | 70 | 20 | 10 | 0.0084 |
| | Disagree | 33 | 37 | 30 | |
| I like driving around when I visit the country (21) | Agree | 66 | 28 | 7 | |
| | Disagree | 40 | 28 | 33 | |
| Attitude Scales | | | | | |
| Scale 1 | Low | 59 | 21 | 21 | |
| | High | 46 | 31 | 23 | |
| Scale 2 | Low | 56 | 25 | 19 | |
| | High | 47 | 29 | 24 | |
| Sample totals | | 51 | 27 | 22 | |

at the 1 percent level. In each case those respondents with further education were most likely to uphold traditional values and less likely not to. Minimum educational attainment showed an opposite relationship. Those respondents with educational attainment greater than minimum but only to school level were ambivalent in their responses.

Educational attainment had virtually no effect on the attitude scales however (Table 13.10). The minor difference between low and high scores among those respondents with minimum education may be

the effect of sampling error and it is unlikely that any clear relationship exists in the further education group, as might have been expected. These figures have been included, despite the intention not to report negative findings, since they suggest that social class, in the form of occupational grouping, is the main independent variable of interest with respect to attitudes to recreation in the countryside.

Table 13.11 shows the effect of car ownership on response to the attitude statements. Car owners tended to disagree with statements 7 and 11 which both related to a desire for more recreational provision in the countryside, while those respondents who did not own cars tended to agree with these statements. The former of these relationships was significant at the 5 percent level. It is possible that these responses mirror the general differences attributable to occupational grouping, but it is equally likely that these relationships are due to a genuine demand by those who do not own cars for some kind of recreational provision in the country.

The responses to statement 17, with those who do not car owners showing a preference for meeting other people in the country, are more likely to mirror the effects of occupational group. The most surprising result is perhaps that car owners tended to show a lack of preference for spending the day driving around, while those who do not own cars were more likely to agree with this particular statement. Whether this is a reflection of traditional countryside recreation values being espoused by those in the upper occupational groups, or whether some other factor is responsible for this

Table 13.11 Attitudes towards recreational use of the countryside by car ownership of respondents (n=81)

| Attitude statements | | Car ownership: car access | none | m'cycle | | significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | | |
| There should be a wide variety of things to see and do povided (7) | Agree | 18 | 32 | 43 | 7 | 0.0200 |
| | Disagree | 53 | 26 | 21 | - | |
| There should be more scope for recreation in the country (11) | Agree | 35 | 23 | 35 | 7 | |
| | Disagree | 49 | 24 | 27 | - | |
| I like meeting people when I go to the country (17) | Agree | 30 | 20 | 48 | 2 | 0.1000 |
| | Disagree | 48 | 33 | 15 | 4 | |
| I like to spend the day driving around (21) | Agree | 34 | 24 | 41 | - | |
| | Disagree | 44 | 28 | 23 | - | |
| Sample totals | | 38 | 28 | 31 | 2 | |

difference is diffi-cult to decide.

It is difficult to say how much education and car ownership simply reflect social class and whether these relationships are merely the expression of social class or whether meaningful relationships with education or car ownership do exist. The size of the sample does not allow for any further breakdown of these categories and analysis in greater depth thus is not possible.

Attitudes towards recreation also varied with age (Table 13.12). Again these trend in the expected direction and are explicable in terms of stage in the family lifecycle. None of these relationships are significant at the 5 percent level. Younger people and families with young children are less likely to agree with traditional recreational values, and are more likely to agree with the demand for increased provision for leisure purposes.

Table 13.12 Attitudes to recreational use of the countryside by age of respondent (n=81)

| Attitude statements | | Age of respondent 14--29 | 30--54 | 55plus | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | |
| Most important thing about the country is getting close to nature (1) | Agree | 24 | 39 | 37 | |
| | Disagree | 46 | 27 | 27 | |
| I prefer to find quiet uncrowded places (3) | Agree | 27 | 39 | 34 | 0.0655 |
| | Disagree | 62 | 12 | 25 | |
| Noisy events and places that attract a lot of people are out of place (6) | Agree | 20 | 46 | 33 | 0.0572 |
| | Disagree | 47 | 24 | 29 | |
| There should be a wide variety of things to see and do provided (7) | Agree | 46 | 32 | 21 | 0.0913 |
| | Disagree | 24 | 41 | 35 | |
| There should be more scope for recreation (11) | Agree | 31 | 34 | 34 | 0.0995 |
| | Disagree | 22 | 38 | 40 | |
| I like meeting other people when I go to the country (17) | Agree | 30 | 28 | 42 | 0.0774 |
| | Disagree | 37 | 33 | 30 | |
| | Neutral | 28 | 64 | 7 | |
| I like to visit places where there's something provided to attract people (2) | Agree | 34 | 31 | 35 | |
| | Disagree | 29 | 43 | 29 | |
| | Neutral | 17 | 83 | - | |
| The country is for quiet and peaceful recreation only (20) | Agree | 22 | 36 | 42 | |
| | Disagree | 42 | 35 | 22 | |
| I like driving around when I visit the country (21) | Agree | 24 | 28 | 48 | |
| | Disagree | 37 | 42 | 21 | |
| Scale 1 | Low | 45 | 31 | 24 | |
| | High | 25 | 38 | 36 | |
| Scale 2 | Low | 41 | 25 | 34 | |
| | High | 26 | 43 | 31 | |
| Totals for sample | | 32 | 36 | 32 | |

However, the statements 'I like meeting other people when I visit the country' and 'I like to visit places where there's something provided to attract people' do not perhaps surprisingly, follow this pattern. These statements are notable for having a high

number of 'neutral' or 'don't know' responses, and these were concentrated in the 30 to 54 age group. In respect of the first statement, this relationship does not follow the trend of the other statements which measure the same attribute. The second statement may be tentatively interpreted as reflecting the uncertainty of family groups looking for somewhere to go with children.

Cross-tabulation by lifecycle stage (Table 13.13) provides confirmation of these results. Respondents with children under ten clearly did not subscribe to traditional values and modes of recreation, and they expressed a desire for greater recreational provision. Response to statement 14 in particular showed a significant relationship at the 5 percent level. Interestingly, those respondents also testified to the unsuitability of the countryside as an environment for their particular recreational needs. The effect of age and position in the lifecycle on scores on the attitude scales supports the pattern suggested above and confirms the importance of these variables in determining attitudes to recreation in the countryside.

The differences in attitudes to recreation attributable to sex are presented in Table 13.14. Only two statements showed any relationship with sex-role differences: these were strikingly clear. All of the respondents who disagreed with statement 3 ('I prefer to find quiet uncrowded places to visit in the country') were female (significant at 1 percent), and it is likely that this reflects both female awareness of children's needs (in this case in terms of recreation) and the greater female interest in social

Table 13.13 Attitudes to recreational use of the countryside by lifecycle stage of respondent (n=81)

| Attitude statements | | Life cycle stage of respondent: unmarried no children | children u/10 | children o/10 | significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | |
| Noisy events and places that attract people are out of place (6) | Agree | 61 | 15 | 23 | 0.0826 |
| | Disagree | 69 | 21 | 10 | |
| It's important to go for a walk when you visit the country (8) | Agree | 55 | 16 | 19 | 0.0547 |
| | Disagree | 57 | 36 | 7 | |
| There should be more scope for recreation in the country (11) | Agree | 58 | 23 | 19 | |
| | Disagree | 65 | 16 | 19 | |
| There's no need for the planners to provide leisure facilities in the country (14) | Agree | 73 | 6 | 22 | 0.0366 |
| | Disagree | 54 | 33 | 13 | |
| The country is more interesting than the city (16) | Agree | 66 | 14 | 20 | |
| | Disagree | 49 | 43 | 7 | |
| I like driving around when I visit the country (21) | Agree | 86 | 7 | 7 | 0.0529 |
| | Disagree | 51 | 28 | 21 | |
| Scale 1 | Low | 76 | 28 | 7 | |
| | High | 65 | 14 | 22 | |
| Scale 2 | Low | 62 | 25 | 12 | |
| | High | 67 | 15 | 19 | |
| Sample totals | | 66 | 18 | 16 | |

Table 13.14 Attitudes to recreational use of the countryside by sex of respondent (n=81)

| Attitude statements | | Sex of respondent: male | female | significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | |
| I prefer to find quiet uncrowded places to visit in the country (3) | Agree | 58 | 42 | 0.0033 |
| | Disagree | - | 100 | |
| I prefer to get away from all signs of civilisation (12) | Agree | 61 | 39 | 0.0582 |
| | Disagree | 38 | 62 | |
| Sample totals | | 53 | 47 | |

contact. Male respondents were more likely to express the need to get away from civilisation into the wilds, while female respondents were more likely to disagree with this item. This also seems to be a reflection of the response to the previous item: women thus appear to have greater desire for social contact and less preference for getting away from people and civilisation.

**Multivariate analysis of attitude statements**

Figure 13.3 shows how the respondents differentiated the attitude statements. A stable solution was obtained for these variables: the clusters obtained from cluster analysis have been superimposed on the MDS plot and it can be seen that they correspond quite clearly with the pattern found by MDS.

Four distinct groups are identified by multivariate analysis: the MDS plot shows that certain groups of respondents tended to answer the statements in any one cluster in the same way. Statements 4, 9, 15 and 18 did not discriminate among the respondents, having uniformly high agreement or disagreement, and thus would have been answered similarly by all respondents.

Secondly, statements 1, 5, 6, 12, 14, and 20 (getting close to nature, like to get away from other people, noisy events and places that attract people, prefer to get away from all signs of civilisation, no need for planners to provide leisure facilities and the country is for quiet and peaceful recreation only) formed another cluster. All these statements imply agreement with traditional recreation values, and thus, if a respondent agreed with any one of these statements, he or she would have a higher

Figure13.3 MDS plot of attitude statements, by respondents

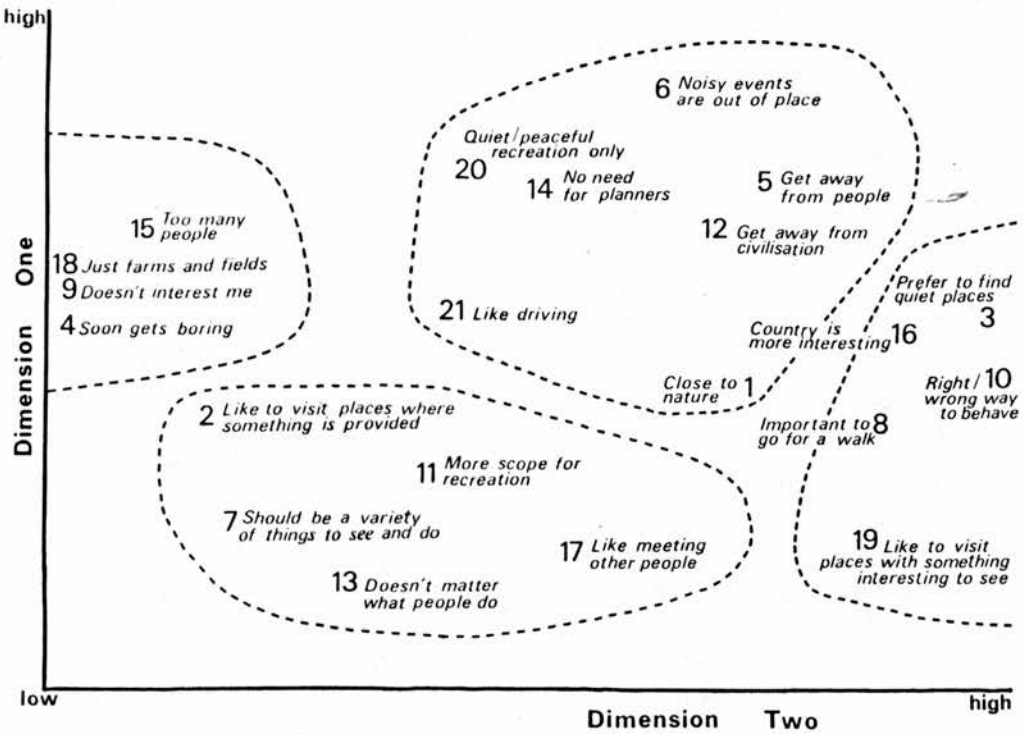
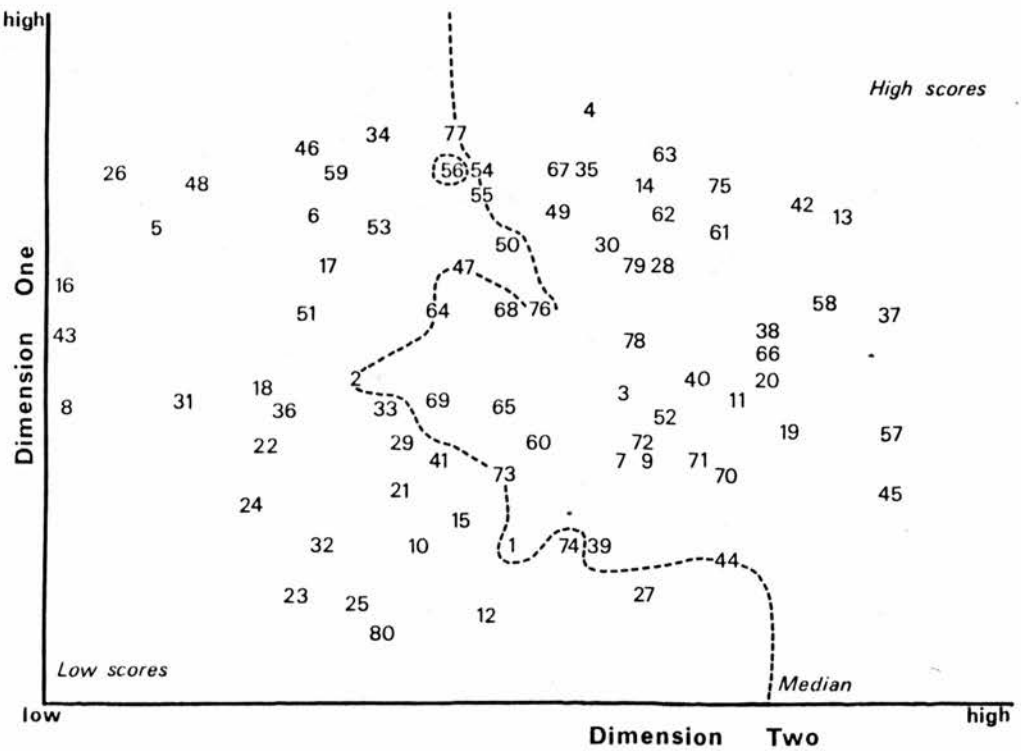



Figure13.4 MDS plot of respondents, by attitude statements



probability of agreeing with most or all of the other statements in this group.

The third group, comprising statements 2, 7, 11, 13 and 17 (like to visit places that attract people, there should be a wide variety of things to see and do provided, there should be more scope for recreation, it doesn't matter what people do in the country, I like meeting other people) are all statements implying attitudes contrary to traditional values. Again, agreement with one statement implies agreement with most or all of the others in this group.

The position of statement 21 (I like to spend the day driving) is ambiguous. This was the only anomalous variable in this MDS plot: although it was worded in what was intended to be a similar fashion to the statements in the third group, three of the cluster analyses placed it with the second group. This could be a result of 'error', in that this statement does not measure a clearcut attitude, and thus does not clearly fall into either of the two clusters, which represent a very simple continuum of countryside recreation values. 'Spending the day driving' is a very popular countryside recreation activity even though it may be considered the antithesis of traditional values that emphasise close contact with nature and the country, and hence a lack of mechanical intermediaries. It was noted above that certain social groups, namely those in occupational groups I and II, those with further education, and those families with children, were less likely to share this acceptance of the drive as an appropriate activity. The ambiguous position of statement 21 may be due to the fact that

different respondents agreed or disagreed with it for different reasons.

The final group, made up of statements 3, 8, 10, 16 and 19 (I like to visit quiet uncrowded places, it's important to go for a walk, there's a right and a wrong way to behave, the country is more interesting than the city and I like to visit places where there's something interesting to see) has already been discussed to some extent earlier. Responses to these statements do not correlate as highly with the other groups, since the nature of many of these statements appears to influence agreement, and with the exception perhaps of stage in the family lifecycle, disagreement with these statements does not follow any hypothesized pattern. As a result these statements can be interpreted as representing the more general aspects of attitudes towards the countryside and to recreation held by the sample as a whole.

The dimensions of variation in this scale can be tentatively explained as follows. Dimension one separates clusters two and three, and thus discriminates between those who agree with traditional attitudes towards countryside recreation and those who hold opposing attitudes. The second dimension isolates statements reflecting two groups of more general, normative attitudes: one held uniformly by all respondents, the other group of attitudes held by a large proportion of respondents.

As a further check on the validity of the multivariate analysis, a factor analysis was performed on the attitude scale data, using the principal factoring with iteration method (Statistical Package for

the Social Sciences, 1975). Although the results are not reported here in any detail, this analysis provided support for the findings presented here, in that the first two factors clearly reflected the second and third clusters of statements discussed above. Hence this confirms the basic dichotomy between those respondents who agreed with the values of the traditional ideology, and those who preferred more gregarious and intensive recreation. A further point of interest highlighted by the factor analysis was that response to statement 15 (there are too many people visiting the country these days) did not appear to be related to response to any other statement. The position of statement 15 in the MDS plot accords with this interpretation, and thus it may be concluded that perception of the countryside as being crowded is not related to other attitudes, in particular to the attitudes of the traditional ideology.

Scaling of respondents in terms of their responses to the attitude items was not successful, owing to the high amount of individual variation in responses (Figure 13.4). Thus, no discrete clusters could be identified and the stress value of the MDS plot was very high (0.1822 for the three dimensional solution; 0.2673 for the two dimensional solution). The second dimension corresponds with the order of scores on the cumulative attitude scales and would thus appear to reflect high and low degrees of correspondence with traditional values. The ten respondents who were lowest on this dimension had a mean scale score (on Scale 1) of 69, while the ten highest had a mean score of 38 (the median value was 58). This dimension thus discriminates between respondents in the same way as

the attitude scales (see Tables 13.8 to 13.13). Dimension one proved difficult to name, as no systematic differences could be found to differentiate respondents who were high or low on this dimension. This indicates that multivariate analysis was only partly successful in describing the variation in the data. Since cluster analysis did not isolate any homogenous groups of respondents, it appears reasonable to accept that only trends or dimensions of difference exist among the respondents with respect to the scale items.

**Conclusion**

With regard to the reasons selected by respondents as contributing to their enjoyment of the countryside, broad similarities are evidently more significant than differences among the respondents: the general descriptive reasons predominate. However, a number of respondents chose family, social, skills and learning reasons as being important to their experience, and it is clear that although the most popular reasons for visiting the countryside are very widely held, there are also significant minority reasons for visiting the country. No consistent pattern emerged from multivariate analysis, confirming the finding that scenery, peace and quiet and fresh air are the most widely held reasons, but in cross-tabulation with socio-economic variables, age, position in the lifecycle and attitude score differentiated even some of the most popular reasons.

The concept of the traditional ideology appears to discriminate between respondents: some aspects of attitudes towards use of the

countryside for recreation evoke general agreement, while there is a group of respondents who tend to agree with statements embodying the values of the traditional ideology and a group who disagree. Unlike the previous variables examined, attitudes to recreational use of the countryside varied with occupational status. Although there was broad agreement with the values of the traditional ideology across all occupational groups, groups I and II tended to be somewhat over-represented in agreement with these values, while there was a greater degree of disagreement in groups IV and V. Education and car ownership appeared to mirror the effects of occupational status, while age and position in the lifecycle still exerted a considerable influence. Men were more likely to be supportive of traditional values while women showed a tendency to preference for more sociable recreation and less remote environments. Multivariate analysis supported these findings by reflecting the general polarisation of respondents on a dimension from strong agreement with the values of the traditional ideology to strong disagreement with these attitudes.

## 14: Cognition in countryside recreation II

The results of the questions concerned with perception of the countryside as a recreational environment are presented in this chapter. The data were collected by means of the multiple sorting task (Canter et al., 1976), using a set of twenty five photographs of varying recreational environments in the countryside (see Chapter Nine for details). Two kinds of data are obtained from the sorting task: category descriptors or constructs describing the groups of photographs respondents produced, and the photographs comprising these groups. Analysis of the second data set has not been attempted for two reasons: problems of preparing and handling the data would have been considerable and, since few of the categories were cited by more than ten respondents, it was felt that this analysis would not prove particularly rewarding.

In addition to the sorting task, respondents were asked to select those photographs which represented 'the sort of places they usually visit, or would like to visit' and also those which represented 'the sort of places which they would not like to visit'. These groups of photographs thus provided data on the respondents' preferences for recreation environments in the countryside, while the data from the sorting task provided information on how the respondents perceived the countryside, what they were aware of or saw as important, and how they described these phenomena.

The relative popularity of the photographs (from the preference

Table 14.1 Choice of photographs as preferred and disliked recreation environments (n=81)

| Description and number of photograph | Preference Percentage of respondents | Dislike Percentage of respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Trees, bushes, rough pasture, track, one person (7) | 79 | 14 |
| Close up of two people on path among trees (13) | 75 | 16 |
| Tarmac road through parkland, two people in distance (20) | 73 | 17 |
| Open glade among conifers, campfire and tent (19) | 72 | 20 |
| Fishing village with harbour and boats,fields,trees (18) | 72 | 17 |
| River, trees, city buildings in distance, benches and people on river embankment (23) | 72 | 21 |
| Riverside,trees,meadow,picnic tables and some people (17) | 70 | 17 |
| Two people on track on open moorland (16) | 70 | 20 |
| Family group walking on track through forest (5) | 68 | 22 |
| Lakeside with bushes and trees, no people, birds (14) | 67 | 24 |
| Hills and moorland, no people (10) | 64 | 28 |
| Windmill in village, workman and horse (15) | 62 | 30 |
| Industrial archaeology village,picnic tables,people (24) | 62 | 30 |
| Picnic tables,park furniture, group of people,trees (1) | 54 | 36 |
| Ruined castle,lawns,benches, some people (2) | 53 | 41 |
| Stately home, drive, lawns, several people (12) | 52 | 38 |
| Canoeing,boating on lake,jetty,picnic tables,people (4) | 52 | 41 |
| Landscaped country garden with exotic trees (9) | 51 | 36 |
| Open moorland,lake,no people (22) | 48 | 43 |
| Large number of people at barbecue at wooded beach (6) | 46 | 44 |
| Lawn, trees, several people, pram, folding chairs (25) | 43 | 48 |
| Historic house set among trees, no people (3) | 42 | 51 |
| Groups of people picnicking by tarmac road (11) | 41 | 52 |
| Picnic tables,tent,large number of people,open land (21) | 37 | 49 |
| Family groups in adventure playground set in trees (8) | 33 | 56 |

data) is shown in Table 14.1. A brief description of each photograph is attached; the photographs themselves are presented in the Appendix.

The photographs representing 'picturesque' scenes more or less unaffected by recreational use or development tended to be the most popular, although pictures 17 and 23 showed a certain degree of recreational development (such as park benches and picnic tables). Photographs 15, 18 and 24 testify to the relative popularity of the country village. Those photographs which showed a considerable degree of recreational use and development (in the form of

considerable numbers of people and obvious recreational facilities) were the least popular. This obvious preference for 'picturesque' scenes or scenery presented as a pleasing view is hardly surprising. What is of greater interest, however, is that some respondents did not share this preference for the most popular photographs, and that the least popular photograph (8) was still liked by one third of the sample.

The lack of popularity of two particular photographs (3 and 22) is of special interest, especially compared with the higher popularity of photographs with similar content. This relative unpopularity appears to have occurred because the content of the photographs was presented in a less visually appealing context (because of light and shade in picture 3 and lack of variety in picture 22), and this influenced preference. This bias did not appear to affect the selection of groups of photographs unduly, as will be demonstrated from the results of multivariate analysis of these data.

The pattern of non-preference almost exactly matches the pattern of preference. It is again noteworthy that even the least popular picture was disliked by only just over half of the sample (56 percent) while a small proportion disliked even the most popular photographs. This finding again suggests a polarisation of opinion and preference: different people perceive different kinds of recreational environment as preferable or desirable.

Table 14.2 presents preliminary results from the sorting task. The groups or constructs elicited from respondents were classified into forty categories, to preserve as much of the individual variety in

Table 14.2 Constructs elicited from the Multiple Sorting Task (n=81)

| Construct and number | Number of respondents | * construct category |
|---|---|---|
| Historic buildings and stately homes (3) | 35 | 1 |
| Country walks, places for walks (8) | 24 | 1 |
| Places for picnics, places to sit and relax (9) | 23 | 1 |
| Places of interest, places to see and visit (10) | 23 | 1 |
| Waterside (1) | 22 | 1 |
| Hills, moors, open spaces (27) | 18 | 1 |
| Leisure, recreation, activities, people doing things (including named activities e.g., boating, camping) (32) | 16 | 1 |
| Groups of people, crowds, large numbers (24) | 14 | 2 |
| Scenic, scenery, picturesque (26) | 14 | 1 |
| Villages (4) | 13 | 1 |
| Solitude, away from people (12) | 12 | 5 |
| Places for the family, for children to play (11) | 11 | 1 |
| Organised and managed activities (40) | 11 | 3 |
| Country/countryside places (28) | 10 | 1 |
| Buildings (2) | 10 | 1 |
| Wild, remote, away from it all (16) | 9 | 5 |
| Peace and quiet (34) | 9 | 5 |
| Nature, natural, unspoilt (18) | 7 | 5 |
| Coast, sea-side (29) | 7 | 1 |
| Woodland (30) | 7 | 1 |
| Nature trails, organised walks, nature study places (31) | 7 | 1 |
| No life, nothing happening (15) | 6 | 4 |
| Countryside places where visitors go (23) | 6 | 2 |
| Gardens (5) | 5 | 1 |
| Parks (6) | 5 | 1 |
| Not natural, artificial (39) | 3 | 3 |
| Free, freedom (37) | 3 | 5 |
| Not country, not open enough (35) | 3 | 5 |
| Wildlife and nature parks (7) | 2 | 3 |
| Roads and places dangerous for children (21) | 2 | 1 |
| Nature reserve (33) | 2 | 1 |
| Places with too much happening, too many things (13) | 1 | 3 |
| Places with life, something happening (14) | 1 | 4 |
| Noisy places (17) | 1 | 5 |
| Places you can talk to people, make friends (19) | 1 | 5 |
| Places to explore and discover (20) | 1 | 5 |
| Places not organised for visitors (22) | 1 | 2 |
| Medium numbers of people (25) | 1 | 2 |
| Companionship, doing things together (36) | 1 | 5 |
| Green (38) | 1 | 5 |
| Other (41) | 6 | - |

*this column indicates the category to which each construct was later assigned (see Table 14.3)

the range of response as possible. The original words used by respondents to describe the groups of photographs have been retained wherever possible.

Respondents were handed the photographs in random order and were given the instruction 'can you have a look at these photographs, see if you can sort them into groups on the basis of anything they might have in common, and then tell me what it is that makes each group different.' The majority of respondents only did one sort through the photographs, although they were prompted by the interviewer to look for more groups until they stated that no further groups could be found. Some respondents however used the same photographs in several groups. Respondents were also asked to explain why they liked, or did not like, the photographs in their preference/non-preference groups, and these reasons were used together with the other constructs in the analysis.

The mean number of categories produced by respondents was 4.9, with a maximum of ten and a minimum of one. Purely descriptive groups predominate (descriptive of the content of the photographs), and this is to be expected since broad differences and similarities based on the descriptive content of the pictures are immediately apparent. Other constructs of interest relate to numbers of people, recreational facilities and perceived attributes or characteristics of the content of the pictures. These latter constructs provide evidence of the validity of the attitude scale.

It was decided to condense the list of constructs into five groups, presented in Table 14.3. These groups were based on the broad

Table 14.3 Respondents assigned to condensed construct categories (n=81)

| Construct category | Number in group | Number not in group | Percentage in group | Percentage not in group |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Descriptive | 65 | 16 | 80 | 20 |
| 2 People | 21 | 60 | 26 | 74 |
| 3 Facilities | 17 | 64 | 21 | 79 |
| 4 Life/no life distinction | 6 | 75 | 7 | 93 |
| 5 Attributive | 24 | 57 | 30 | 70 |
| Either or both 2, 3 | 31 | 50 | 38 | 62 |
| Only category 1 | 27 | 54 | 33 | 67 |

categories noted above and constructs were assigned to them under the following rules. 'Descriptive' constructs were those which merely described the content of the picture, without assigning any characteristic or attribute to the content. 'People' constructs were those which specifically mentioned the existence of people, groups, or numbers of people as being descriptive or characteristic of that group of photographs. 'Recreational facilities' constructs were those that specifically mentioned the existence of recreational facilities, provision or developments. 'Attributive' constructs were those in which the respondent attributed some characteristic (other than related to the two categories described immediately above) to the content of the photograph, e.g., peace and quiet, wild, remote, freedom. One other category of constructs was used since it did not fit clearly into the above classification, and it was felt that it contained useful and interesting information. This category encompassed the following constructs: 'nothing to do', 'no life', 'nothing happening' and

'nothing there'.

With the exception of including constructs 11 (places for the family) and 32 (leisure activities) in group 1, it is felt that this five-fold classification adequately summarises one major aspect of respondents' perceptions of the countryside as a recreational environment. Any classification, of course, will lose a certain amount of information by generalisation, and will also impose on the data some kind of structure which the researcher sees as being important or illustrative. The question of how much this classification is a true reflection of respondents' perceptions and how much it is influenced by the author's own preconceptions, is a difficult one, and will be dealt with more fully in the discussion (Chapter Sixteen).

The limitations imposed by the size of the sample on making inferences from the sample to the population are even more relevant in the following section, since the numbers of respondents who cited each construct are small. Frequency counts have been used in Table 14.2 to show the actual numbers on which each sub-sample is based. Despite these limitations, some interesting variations emerged between groups of individuals who cited different constructs.

Cross-tabulation of constructs by occupational group (Table 14.4) indicated that a series of relationships exist, despite the small numbers in each sub-sample. Those constructs which refer to the perception of other people in the countryside and to 'organised and managed activities' were predominantly cited by those respondents

Table 14.4 Constructs by occupational class of respondents (n=81)

| Constructs | | Occupational grouping I | II | III | IV/V | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | | |
| Solitude, away from people 12 | Cited | 30 | 35 | 17 | 17 | 0.0190 |
| | Not cited | 12 | 16 | 33 | 40 | |
| Groups, crowds 24 | Cited | 43 | 29 | 14 | 14 | 0.0190 |
| | Not cited | 12 | 19 | 31 | 37 | |
| Organised managed activities 40 | Cited | 27 | 54 | 9 | 9 | 0.0090 |
| | Not cited | 16 | 16 | 31 | 37 | |
| Hills, moors 27 | Cited | 28 | 33 | 22 | 17 | |
| | Not cited | 14 | 18 | 30 | 38 | |
| Peace and quiet 34 | Cited | - | 22 | 22 | 56 | |
| | Not cited | 16 | 16 | 31 | 37 | |
| Construct categories | | | | | | |
| 1 Descriptive | | 20 | 23 | 24 | 32 | |
| 2 People | | 33 | 29 | 19 | 19 | NA |
| 3 Facilities | | 29 | 53 | 12 | 6 | NA |
| 4 Life/no life | | - | 17 | 50 | 33 | |
| 5 Attributive | | 21 | 42 | 17 | 21 | NA |
| People/facilities | | 32 | 39 | 16 | 13 | 0.0010 |
| Category 1 only | | 11 | 7 | 33 | 48 | |

in occupational groups I and II, and were much less likely to be cited by respondents in groups IV and V. These relationships were statistically significant at the 5 percent level in the case of constructs 12 and 24 and at the 1 percent level in the case of construct 40.

Construct 27 ('hills, moors, open spaces') was also cited more frequently by those in the higher occupational groups and less

often by those in groups IV and V, although this was not a statistically signi-ficant relationship. It must be borne in mind that these constructs do not reflect preference or dislike and it is possible to assume only that these statements reflect a higher awareness of such situations, although this may imply that a preference or dislike may be involved. Furthermore, these results are consistent with the findings presented in the previous chapter, which showed that occupational grouping was related to attitudes to other people in the countryside and, to a lesser extent, to attitudes to recreational behaviour and provision.

Those relationships indicated that there was a higher chance of an individual from occupational groups I or II having a negative attitude to other people in the countryside while individuals from occupational groups IV and V would be more likely to hold attitudes opposed to 'traditional' recreational values and modes of behaviour. The relationship between these constructs and occupational grouping provides further support for these findings. Interestingly, construct 34 (peace and quiet) shows a trend to being cited predominantly by those in occupational groups III, IV and V. However since the relationship is based on a very small sub-sample it is not possible to do more than draw attention to this trend.

It must also be borne in mind that these relationships are by no means exclusive and that it is possible for individuals from any occupational strata to hold these attitudes; nevertheless, they appear to occur more frequently among the higher occupational groupings, and conversely, there appears to be a higher proportion

of individuals who hold opposing views in occupational groups IV and V.

Table 14.4 also shows the results of cross-tabulation of occupational group with the five condensed construct categories. Two extra categories have been added for the purpose of this analysis: those individuals who gave either or both the 'people' or 'facilities' constructs, and also those respondents who cited only descriptive constructs. The chi-square statistic was not appropriate to some of the data in this table when more than 20 percent of the expected categories had values of less than 5. All the categories show a relationship with occupational group although in the case of 'No life' the size of the sub-sample is only six. The relationship is statistically significant at 0.1 percent level in the case of the 'either or both people and facilities' categories. It is also noteworthy that those respondents who cited only descriptive categories were under-represented in occupational groups I and II and over-represented in groups IV and V. This relationship with occupational class is supported by the pattern of response to the attitude statements presented in Chapter Thirteen in particular by the response to statements concerning perception of other people in the countryside.

The results of cross-tabulation of preferences for photographs by occupational group (Table 14.5) provide further support for these findings. Preference for all the photographs appears to be spread fairly evenly throughout the sample, but where preference was not expressed (which equated with dislike) this was most common among

Table 14.5 Preference for photographs by occupational grouping(n=81)

| Photograph | | Occupational class I | II | III | IV/V | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | | |
| 5 | Preference | 18 | 31 | 22 | 29 | 0.0087 |
| | No preference | 15 | - | 42 | 42 | |
| 7 | Preference | 22 | 25 | 25 | 28 | 0.0206 |
| | No preference | - | 6 | 41 | 53 | |
| 13 | Preference | 23 | 25 | 20 | 33 | 0.0052 |
| | No preference | - | 10 | 55 | 35 | |
| 16 | Preference | 19 | 28 | 25 | 28 | 0.0504 |
| | No preference | 12 | 4 | 38 | 46 | |
| 17 | Preference | 19 | 19 | 32 | 30 | |
| | No preference | 12 | 25 | 21 | 42 | |
| 19 | Preference | 19 | 26 | 24 | 31 | |
| | No preference | 13 | 9 | 39 | 39 | |
| 20 | Preference | 24 | 22 | 27 | 27 | 0.0465 |
| | No preference | - | 18 | 32 | 50 | |
| 22 | Preference | 21 | 23 | 31 | 26 | |
| | No preference | 14 | 19 | 26 | 40 | |

those in occupational groups III, IV and V. Furthermore, the photographs presented in this table comprised (together with 10, 14 and 23) one of the groups isolated by multivariate analysis (see below). This group represented recreational environments with little or no evidence of recreational use and development, and also little evidence of human use of the land. Thus, of those who disliked these environments, the largest proportion appear to be drawn from occupational groups IV and V. The relationships with photographs 7 and 20 were significant at the 5 percent level, and that with photograph 13 at the 1 percent level.

Preferences for photographs show a complex relationship with education (Table 14.6). Preferences for photographs 6, 8, 11 and 21

Table 14.6 Preferences for photographs by educational attainment of respondent (n=81)

| Photograph | | Educational attainment: minimum school | further | | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | |
| 6 | Preference | 38 | 43 | 19 | 0.0110 |
| | No preference | 61 | 14 | 25 | |
| 8 | Preference | 37 | 48 | 15 | 0.0109 |
| | No preference | 57 | 17 | 29 | |
| 11 | Preference | 42 | 46 | 12 | 0.0062 |
| | No preference | 56 | 15 | 29 | |
| 21 | Preference | 47 | 40 | 13 | 0.0938 |
| | No preference | 53 | 20 | 28 | |
| 7 | Preference | 44 | 31 | 25 | 0.0556 |
| | No preference | 76 | 12 | 12 | |
| 13 | Preference | 43 | 34 | 23 | 0.0185 |
| | No preference | 75 | 5 | 20 | |
| 16 | Preference | 42 | 32 | 26 | 0.0612 |
| | No preference | 71 | 17 | 12 | |
| 19 | Preference | 41 | 33 | 26 | 0.0299 |
| | No preference | 74 | 13 | 13 | |
| 20 | Preference | 41 | 34 | 25 | 0.0118 |
| | No preference | 77 | 9 | 14 | |

(which are all pictures of large groups of people and organised recreation facilities) were highest among those who completed school education only, and with the exception of photograph 6, were lower among those with further education. Preferences for photographs 6, 8 and 11 were, however, also lower among those who had been educated only to the statutory minimum, and this group also clearly expressed less preference for photographs 7, 13, 16, 19 and 20, which were among the most popular photographs. Those respondents in the two higher educational categories tended to be slightly over-represented in their preference for the latter

photographs. These last five photographs represented recreational environments with little or no recreational use or provision and little evidence of human land use. All but three of the relationships presented in Table 8.6 are significant at the 5 percent level, and the relationship with photograph 11 is significant at the 1 percent level.

Table 14.7, which shows the effect of education on the constructs cited by respondents, indicates a clear propensity for respondents with higher education to cite those particular constructs and for respondents with statutory minimum education not to cite them. In the case of construct 10 the relationship was also clear for those who had completed school education (and was significant at the 1 percent level), but this was less marked in the case of the other constructs. The effect of education thus seems to parallel that of occupational class, but is less clear. The parallel is closest with the constructs, and similarly with those photographs which represented environments of minimum recreational use and development. Preference for intensive and developed recreation environments was highest among those who had completed school education, but increasing preference for minimum use environments was related to increasing educational attainment.

From Table 14.7 we can also see the effect of education on the construct categories. Clear relationships are apparent in every instance except for descriptive categories, and these imply that education, and in particular the ability to express oneself in detail, has had some effect on the response to the sorting task,

Table 14.7 Constructs by educational attainment of respondent (n=81)

| Construct | | Level of educational attainment: minimum school | further | | significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | |
| Places of interest 10 | Cited | 22 | 44 | 35 | 0.0047 |
| | Not cited | 62 | 21 | 17 | |
| Groups, crowds 24 | Cited | 36 | 21 | 43 | |
| | Not cited | 54 | 28 | 18 | |
| Hills, moors 27 | Cited | 28 | 33 | 39 | 0.0607 |
| | Not cited | 57 | 25 | 18 | |
| Organised and managed activities 40 | Cited | 27 | 36 | 36 | |
| | Not cited | 54 | 26 | 20 | |
| Construct categories | | | | | |
| 1 Descriptive | | 46 | 29 | 25 | |
| 2 People | | 38 | 29 | 33 | |
| 3 Facilities | | 29 | 24 | 47 | |
| 4 Life/no life | | 17 | 67 | 17 | |
| 5 Attributes | | 29 | 25 | 46 | 0.0100 |
| People/facilities | | 36 | 26 | 39 | 0.1000 |
| Category 1 only | | 70 | 18 | 11 | |

especially with respect to the number, variety and complexity of the groups of photographs selected and described. Those respondents who were only educated to minimum school level tended to be the most likely to produce only descriptive contructs. Those respondents who assigned attributive characteristics to the photographs were overwhelmingly those who had been educated to tertiary level, and this relationship was significant at the 1 percent level. Respondents who cited constructs in the 'people' and 'facilities' categories also tended to be more likely to have been educated to tertiary level and were less likely to have only had a minimum education.

The sorting task was used in a deliberate attempt to minimise the

bias arising from complicated techniques of construct elicitation (Canter et al., 1976); the findings presented in Table 14.7 indicate, however, that the data collected by the sorting task are still influenced by educational ability. This is not a serious form of bias, however, if it is assumed that educational ability and related verbal skills are part of the cognitive system, and are thus direct influences on the products of that system. If attempts are made to allow respondents free expression, as has been the case here, and that as a result some individuals articulate more complex ideas, then it may be argued that these are simply individual differences and not a form of bias. The sorting task is a very uncomplicated and easily understood form of construct elicitation, and as such is unlikely to inhibit the opportunities for respondents to express their ideas.

Table 14.8 Preference for photographs by car ownership (n=81)

| Number of Photograph | | Car ownership: car | access | none | significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents* | | | |
| 15 | Preference | 40 | 38 | 22 | 0.0123 |
| | No preference | 36 | 13 | 45 | |
| 17 | Preference | 39 | 35 | 26 | 0.0283 |
| | No preference | 38 | 12 | 42 | |
| 18 | Preference | 41 | 33 | 24 | |
| | No preference | 30 | 17 | 48 | |
| 19 | Preference | 43 | 33 | 22 | 0.0503 |
| | No preference | 26 | 17 | 52 | |

*Percentages do not sum to 100 since data for motorcyclists is omitted

No relationships were found between car ownership and perceptions of the countryside as represented by the constructs elicited

through the sorting task, and these results have therefore not been presented. Preferences for some of the photographs did show evidence of a relationship with car ownership (Table 14.8). However, the photographs (15, 17, 18 and 19) do not belong to any one group of recreational environment types and the relationships are thus unclear. Those not owning cars tended not to prefer these photographs, those with access showed a greater preference and car owners showed only a slight preference for photographs 18 and 19. Although the relationships with photographs 15 and 17 are significant at the 5 percent level, the results are interpreted as random reflections of the effect of occupational class and are unlikely to have any meaning of their own.

Age and position in the lifecycle can be seen from Tables 14.9 and 14.10 to have a significant influence on perceptions of the countryside and preferences for recreational environments. Construct 15 is very much a product of the 14 to 29 age group; similarly, construct 40 is cited most often by respondents in this age group and least often by those in the highest group. This finding is of particular interest since the results presented in the two previous chapters suggest that younger people are more likely to be interested in sociable activities which may depend on an increased level of provision (Tables 12.3, 13.2 and 13.11).

Nevertheless, this interpretation is not supported by the preferences for photographs in Table 14.9, which indicate that the respondents in the 30 to 54 age group preferred gregarious and intensive recreation environments. The five photographs for which there was a relationship between age and preference (Table 14.9)

Table 14.9 Preferences for photographs and constructs by age of respondent (n=81)

| Number of Photograph | | Age of respondent 14--29 | 30--54 | 55plus | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | |
| 1 | Preference | 23 | 41 | 36 | |
| | No preference | 43 | 30 | 27 | |
| 4 | Preference | 24 | 45 | 31 | |
| | No preference | 41 | 26 | 33 | |
| 6 | Preference | 35 | 46 | 19 | 0.0540 |
| | No preference | 30 | 27 | 43 | |
| 8 | Preference | 30 | 44 | 26 | |
| | No preference | 33 | 32 | 35 | |
| 25 | Preference | 17 | 43 | 40 | 0.0418 |
| | No preference | 44 | 30 | 26 | |
| Construct | | | | | |
| No life 15 | Cited | 83 | - | 17 | NA |
| | Not cited | 28 | 39 | 33 | |
| Hills, moors 27 | Cited | 28 | 61 | 11 | 0.0241 |
| | Not cited | 33 | 29 | 38 | |
| Organised and managed activities 40 | Cited | 46 | 36 | 18 | |
| | Not cited | 30 | 36 | 34 | |
| Sample totals | | 32 | 36 | 32 | |

are all representative of highly-used recreational environments and show evidence of facilities or development for recreation. In each instance preference was highest among respondents in the 30 to 54 age group and lowest among those in the other two groups, a reflection perhaps of the interest of parents with children in suitable recreation facilities. This interpretation is supported by the data in Table 14.10, from which it may be seen that preference for these photographs was expressed most frequently by respondents with children, especially those with young children.

Table 14.10 Preference for photographs and constructs by position lifecycle of respondent (n=81)

| Number of photograph | | Position in lifecycle of respondent: no children 14-29 | no children 30-54 | no children 55+ | children u/10 | children o/10 | significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | | | |
| 1 | Preference | 16 | 13 | 32 | 25 | 14 | 0.0766 |
| | No preference | 40 | 11 | 19 | 11 | 19 | |
| 8 | Preference | 18 | 11 | 22 | 33 | 15 | |
| | No preference | 32 | 13 | 28 | 11 | 17 | |
| 21 | Preference | 23 | 17 | 23 | 27 | 10 | |
| | No preference | 29 | 10 | 28 | 14 | 20 | |
| 25 | Preference | 14 | 6 | 34 | 23 | 23 | 0.0400 |
| | No preference | 37 | 17 | 20 | 15 | 11 | |
| Constructs | | | | | | | |
| Historic buildings 3 | Cited | 14 | 14 | 20 | 20 | 31 | 0.0075 |
| | Not cited | 37 | 11 | 30 | 17 | 4 | |
| Places for the family 11 | Cited | - | 18 | 27 | 36 | 18 | |
| | Not cited | 31 | 11 | 26 | 16 | 16 | |
| Hills, moors 27 | Cited | 22 | 17 | - | 33 | 28 | 0.0235 |
| | Not cited | 29 | 11 | 33 | 14 | 13 | |
| Leisure and recreation 32 | Cited | 25 | 12 | 12 | 25 | 25 | |
| | Not cited | 28 | 12 | 29 | 17 | 14 | |

It must be borne in mind that the size of the sub-sample for construct 15 (6) is too small for any conclusions to be drawn and the chi-square test is not applicable since over 20 percent of the expected frequency cells have values of less than 5. However, since this particular group of respondents (i.e., those who cited construct 15) also showed a tentative relationship with occupational class and education, it appears that they are a sub-group of particular interest, especially as the construct 'no life' is applied to recreational environments which would possibly be perceived differently by other people.

Interestingly, construct 27 ('hills, moors and open spaces') was cited most frequently by the 30 to 54 age group (this relationship significant at the 5 percent level. This finding is supported by the relationship with position in the lifecycle (again significant at the 5 percent level), since respondents with children cited this construct more often. These findings contrast with the qualitative data presented in Chapter Eleven which suggested that parents of young children were less able to visit recreation environments such as hills, moors and wild places. Similarly, respondents with children, especially older children, cited constructs 3 and 32 more often (the former significant at the 1 percent level), while respondents with younger children cited construct 11 most frequently.

These general trends are supported by Table 14.11, from which it can also be seen that the effect of age is complex. Both young and older people were over-represented among those citing 'people' constructs, while the 30 to 54 age group was under-represented. However, individuals in the latter group were over-represented in citing the 'facilities' constructs, which indicates that age cuts across the simple unidirectional relationship of social class and education. The'attributes' group of constructs was cited very frequently by the youngest age group and very infrequently by the older age group, while those respondents who cited only descriptive constructs were under-represented in the 14 to 29 age group and over-represented in the two older groups. This finding, which was significant at the 5 percent level, suggests that respondents in

Table 14.11 Construct categories by age of respondent (n=81)

| Category | Age of respondent 14--29 | 30--54 | 55plus | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Percentage of respondents citing constructs in category | | | |
| 1 Descriptive | 31 | 42 | 28 | |
| 2 People | 38 | 24 | 38 | |
| 3 Facilities | 35 | 47 | 18 | |
| 4 Life/no life | 83 | - | 17 | NA |
| 5 Attributes | 50 | 38 | 12 | 0.1000 |
| People/facilities | 36 | 39 | 36 | |
| Category 1 only | 7 | 52 | 41 | 0.0200 |

the younger age group are generally more articulate in expressing their ideas about the countryside. This conclusion does not fit clearly with the patterns so far elucidated, and is difficult to explain.

Differences between male and female respondents were quite notable with respect to perception of the countryside (Table 14.12). There

Table 14.12 Constructs by sex of respondent (n=81)

| Construct | | Sex of respondent male | female | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | |
| Solitude 12 | Cited | 75 | 25 | |
| | Not cited | 49 | 51 | |
| Wild, remote 16 | Cited | 11 | 89 | 0.0202 |
| | Not cited | 58 | 42 | |
| Hills, moors 27 | Cited | 78 | 22 | 0.0347 |
| | Not cited | 46 | 54 | |

Table 14.13 Preference for photographs by sex of respondent (n=81)

| Number of Photograph | | Sex of respondent: male | female | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | |
| 1 | Preference | 43 | 57 | 0.0846 |
| | No preference | 65 | 35 | |
| 6 | Preference | 35 | 65 | 0.0060 |
| | No preference | 68 | 32 | |
| 8 | Preference | 41 | 59 | |
| | No preference | 59 | 41 | |
| 11 | Preference | 42 | 58 | |
| | No preference | 60 | 40 | |
| 3 | Preference | 41 | 59 | |
| | No preference | 62 | 38 | |
| 9 | Preference | 39 | 61 | 0.0190 |
| | No preference | 68 | 32 | |
| 15 | Preference | 44 | 56 | 0.0640 |
| | No preference | 68 | 32 | |
| 17 | Preference | 46 | 54 | 0.0668 |
| | No preference | 71 | 29 | |
| 24 | Preference | 44 | 56 | 0.0640 |
| | No preference | 68 | 32 | |
| 22 | Preference | 67 | 33 | 0.0326 |
| | No preference | 40 | 60 | |

was a clear tendency for male respondents to cite the construct 'solitude' whereas female respondents were much more likely to use the construct 'wild/remote' (the latter significant at the 5 percent level). Male respondents were also much more likely to use the construct 'hills, moors and open spaces', and this difference was also significant at the 5 percent level. These findings suggest that men and women have significantly different perceptions of certain parts of the countryside as recreational environments and also support the results of the attitudinal questions (Table

13.13) which implied that men are more likely to want to 'get away from it all' while women may tend to prefer civilisation and social contact.

These findings are supported by Table 14.13, from which it can be seen that female preference tended to be for the intensive recreation environments of photographs 1, 6, 8 and 11 and the 'parkland garden' of 9, while men expressed a dislike for those pictures, together with the building in 3, the 'picturesque' and sociable village scenes in 15 and 24, and the environment in 17. The relationship with photograph 6 was significant at the 1 percent level, while the relationship with photograph 9 was significant at the 5 percent level. Male preference was highest for photograph 22 (significant at the 5 percent level) which provides support for the argument that male respondents are more likely to prefer open moorland, with its connotations of solitude and space, (and thus are more likely to support 'traditional' values of countryside recreation) whereas women are less likely to choose this type of environment. These male/female differences in perception are in accord with the findings of Walker (1978) and Hawes (1978). The latter found evidence to show that women prefer leisure activities which involve greater social interaction, and therefore, by inference, they are more likely to dislike remote recreation environments.

Although the variables measuring countryside socialisation showed little or no relationship with attitudes towards, or behaviour in, the countryside, the data provide evidence that residence in the

Table 14.14 Preference for photographs and constructs by previous residence in the countryside as adult (n=81)

| Number of photograph | | Previous residence in country as adult: yes | no | signi-ficance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | |
| 10 | Preference | 37 | 67 | 0.0186 |
| | No preference | 7 | 93 | |
| 16 | Preference | 30 | 70 | 0.0723 |
| | No preference | 8 | 92 | |
| 20 | Preference | 30 | 70 | 0.0309 |
| | No preference | 4 | 96 | |
| Construct | | | | |
| Solitude 12 | Cited | 50 | 50 | 0.0475 |
| | Not cited | 19 | 81 | |
| Groups, crowds 24 | Cited | 50 | 50 | 0.0257 |
| | Not cited | 18 | 82 | |

country as an adult appears to affect perception of the countryside and preference for certain kinds of recreational environment. Table 14.14 shows that adult residence in the countryside was significantly linked to preference for three photographs, all of which were of 'dispersed' recreation environments showing little evidence of human use or management. Similarly, both constructs 12 (solitude) and 24 (groups of people, crowds) were related to adult residence, and all these relationships were statistically significant at the 5 percent level, with the exception of photograph 16. It may be inferred from these findings that adult residence in the countryside appears to predispose individuals to hold values of a 'traditional' kind.

Table 14.15 presents the cross-tabulation of the construct categories by the attitude scales. Strong relationships are

Table 14.15 Construct categories by position of respondent on attitude scales (n=81)

| Construct category | Position on attitude scales: scale 1 low | scale 1 high | scale 1 significance | scale 2 low | scale 2 high | scale 2 significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Percentage of respondents | | | | | |
| 1 Descriptive | 35 | 65 | | 37 | 63 | |
| 2 People | 5 | 95 | 0.0100 | 10 | 90 | 0.0100 |
| 3 Facilities | 12 | 88 | 0.0500 | 18 | 82 | 0.1000 |
| 4 Life/no life | 67 | 33 | | 83 | 17 | |
| 5 Attributes | 21 | 79 | 0.1000 | 25 | 75 | 0.1000 |
| People/facilities | 10 | 90 | 0.0100 | 16 | 84 | 0.0100 |
| Category 1 only | 48 | 52 | | 44 | 56 | |
| totals for sample | 36 | 64 | | 40 | 60 | |

evident between position on the attitude scales and perception of the countryside. Those individuals who cited the 'people' and 'facilities' constructs tended to score very high on both scales. The relationship with the 'people' category was statistically significant at the 1 percent level for both scales, and that with the 'facilities' category was significant at the 5 percent level for scale 1. When these two categories were combined, the relationship was statistically significant at the 1 percent level for both scales. Conversely, those individuals who cited the construct 'no life' scored predominantly low on the scales (although the size of the sub-sample did not allow a test of significance to be made). Those respondents who cited 'attribute' constructs also scored highly on the scales, but those who gave only descriptive categories were slightly more likely to have low scores on Scale One.

Table 14.16 Preferences for photographs by respondents' position on attitude scales (n=81)

| Number of photograph | | Position of respondents on attitude scales: Scale One low | Scale One med | Scale One high | Scale One significance | Scale Two low | Scale Two med | Scale Two high | Scale Two significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percentage of respondents | | | | | | | |
| 1 | preference | 82 | 52 | 45 | | 80 | 61 | 36 | 0.0123 |
| | no preference | 18 | 48 | 60 | | 20 | 39 | 64 | |
| 6 | preference | 73 | 42 | 40 | | 67 | 46 | 36 | |
| | no preference | 27 | 58 | 60 | | 33 | 54 | 64 | |
| 8 | preference | 54 | 34 | 20 | | 60 | 36 | 18 | 0.0154 |
| | no preference | 46 | 66 | 80 | | 40 | 64 | 82 | |
| 11 | preference | 54 | 42 | 30 | | 60 | 48 | 24 | 0.0326 |
| | no preference | 46 | 58 | 70 | | 40 | 52 | 76 | |
| 21 | preference | 54 | 36 | 30 | | 53 | 42 | 24 | |
| | no preference | 46 | 64 | 70 | | 47 | 58 | 76 | |
| 25 | preference | 46 | 44 | 40 | | 67 | 48 | 27 | 0.0280 |
| | no preference | 54 | 56 | 60 | | 33 | 52 | 73 | |
| 2 | preference | 73 | 54 | 40 | | 73 | 52 | 56 | |
| | no preference | 27 | 46 | 60 | | 27 | 48 | 54 | |
| 3 | preference | 73 | 38 | 35 | 0.0823 | 67 | 36 | 36 | 0.0999 |
| | no preference | 27 | 62 | 65 | | 33 | 64 | 64 | |
| 9 | preference | 64 | 50 | 45 | | 67 | 46 | 48 | |
| | no preference | 36 | 50 | 55 | | 33 | 54 | 52 | |
| 12 | preference | 82 | 48 | 45 | 0.0988 | 80 | 46 | 46 | 0.0539 |
| | no preference | 18 | 52 | 55 | | 20 | 54 | 54 | |
| 15 | preference | 82 | 54 | 70 | | 80 | 54 | 61 | |
| | no preference | 18 | 46 | 30 | | 20 | 46 | 39 | |
| 24 | preference | 82 | 60 | 55 | | 87 | 61 | 52 | 0.0664 |
| | no preference | 18 | 40 | 45 | | 13 | 39 | 48 | |
| 10 | preference | 54 | 66 | 65 | | 53 | 64 | 70 | |
| | no preference | 46 | 34 | 35 | | 47 | 36 | 30 | |
| 14 | preference | 64 | 64 | 75 | | 60 | 61 | 76 | |
| | no preference | 36 | 36 | 25 | | 40 | 39 | 24 | |
| 22 | preference | 36 | 48 | 55 | | 40 | 39 | 61 | |
| | no preference | 64 | 52 | 45 | | 60 | 61 | 39 | |

These relationships are supported by the cross-tabulation of prefer-ence for photographs by position on the attitude scales (Table 14.16). Photographs 1, 6, 8, 11, 21 and 25, which represent intensively-used recreation environments and facilities, are clearly preferred by those who scored low on both scales and were disliked by those who had high scores. Of these six photographs, four (1, 8, 11, and 25) showed statistically significant relationships with scale 2 at the 5 percent level. Preferences for photographs 2, 3, 9, 12, 15 and 24 decrease with increased scale score, though none of these was significant at the 5 percent level. The first four photographs are of historic buildings and associated gardens, with variable levels of use; the other two are of 'picturesque' village scenes. Those photographs for which prefe-rence increases with scale score (10, 14, 22) represent 'dispersed' use recreation environments without evidence of land or recreation management. These findings therefore provide support for the hypo-thesis that 'traditional' values of countryside recreation, as mea-sured by the attitude scales, are related positively to preference for those landscapes which bear little evidence of human impact, whether economic or recreational. Secondly, traditional 'values' are related negatively to preference for environments with high levels of recreational use, recreational facilities or man-made features in the countryside.

**Results of multivariate analysis**

The most interesting results from multivariate analysis came from the results of sorting the photographs into preferred and disliked groups. Figure 14.1 shows an MDS plot of photographs from the

preference groups: the photographs are plotted in terms of the people who liked those photographs as recreational environments. Thus a group of photographs indicate that they were liked by the same group of people: if a respondent preferred one photograph in a particular group he or she was also likely to choose the others as preferred recreation environments. The photographs were selected in response to the instruction 'choose those photographs which represent the sort of places that you like to visit, or would like to visit, in the countryside' (and also those the respondents 'did not, or would not, like to visit'). Respondents could leave a third group of residual photographs to which they had a neutral position.

The scale in Figure 14.1 shows that respondents perceived and chose preferred recreation environments in terms of three groups: (a) 'intensive recreation', (b) 'built environment', and (c) 'countryside with little evidence of recreational use or human land use'. This was a stable solution found by both cluster analysis and multidimensional scaling and the clusters have been indicated on the MDS scale. Although the three cluster solution was the 'best' solution from the cluster analysis, as indicated by the fusion coefficient (Wishart 1977), it can be seen from the MDS scale (and was found by earlier stages of the cluster analysis) that group (b), 'built environment' can be split into two separate clusters. One of these (2, 3, 12 and 9) represents photographs of historic buildings and monuments and photograph 9 represents a typical planned garden associated with a large country house or a stately home. The second sub-group comprised photographs 15, 18

Figure 14.1 MDS plot of photographs representing preferred recreation environments, by respondents

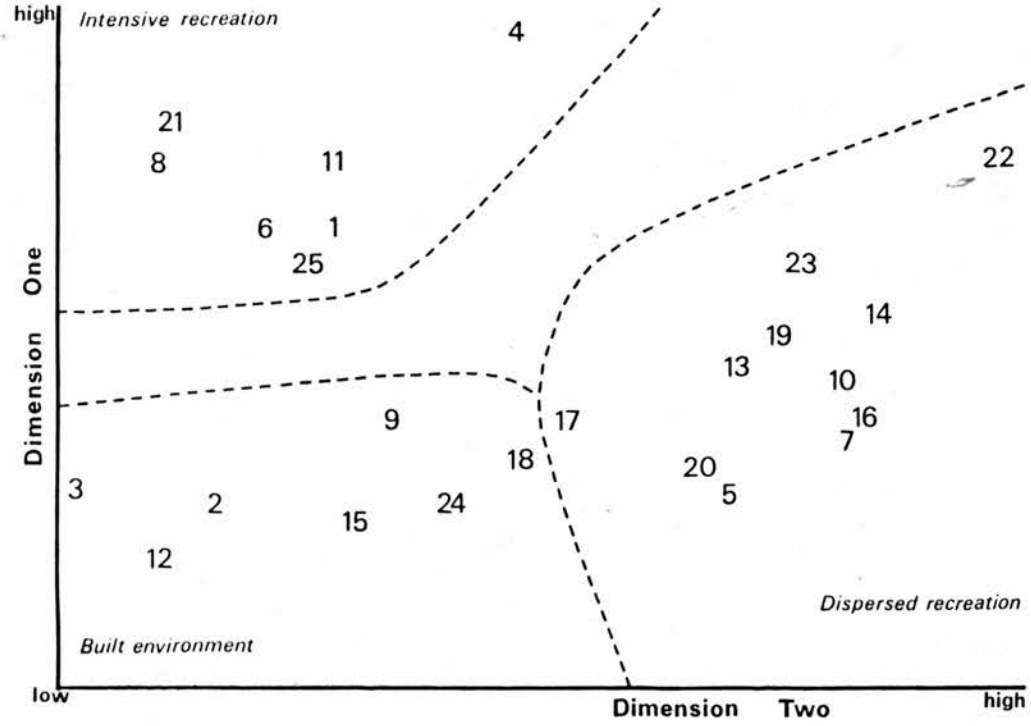
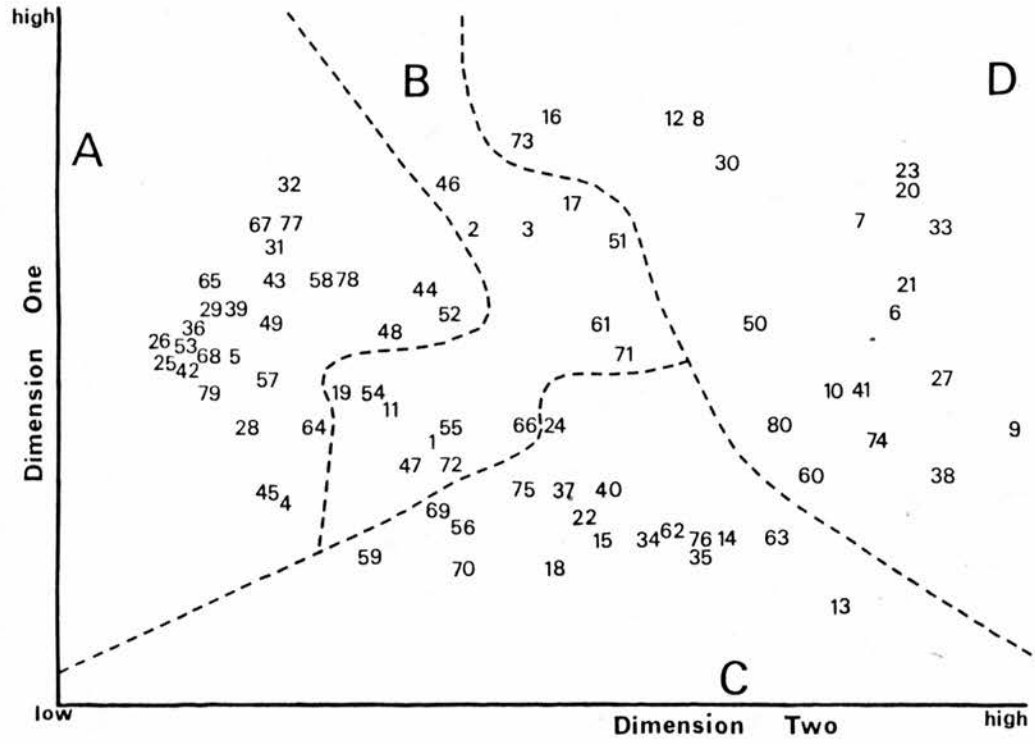



Figure 14.2 MDS plot of respondents, by photographs representing preferred recreation environments



and 24, which were all photographs of 'picturesque' country villages. Similarly, the cluster of photographs of 'countryside with little evidence of recreational or human land use' was made up of two earlier clusters and represents a continuum from the most 'remote' or little used recreational environments (photographs 22, 16, 14 and 10) to those with some evidence of recreational or landscape management and use (photographs 5, 7, 13, 17, 19, 20 and 23).

The results of this analysis imply that the photographs represented a sufficiently wide range of possible recreational environments, as far as the respondents were concerned, since the variables are widely separated across both dimensions. It also indicates that respondents, in choosing preferred recreational environments, perceived the photographs as belonging to groups, rather than individually. Consequently, the individual characteristics of any one picture did not unduly influence choice, and it seems likely that respondents did prefer types of recreation environments and not merely individual scenes, landscapes and places of interest.

A dimensional interpretation of this scale is possible. Dimension one seems to differentiate the built environment from groups of people and managed recreational facilities and would thus appear to discriminate between the preferences of older visitors or those without children, and those who are younger or visit the country as family groups (see Table 14.9 on the relationship between age, lifecycle and preferences for photographs of recreational environments). Dimension two differentiates a continuum from developed and built facilities and groups of people (the

'intensive' recreation environments) to 'dispersed' recreation environments with little or no evidence of landscape management.

We can investigate these preferences further by scaling the respondents in terms of the photographs they chose. A stable solution was reached by both MDS and cluster analysis at the four-cluster level; discrete groups clearly exist in this case, despite a certain amount of individual variation. The scale, shown in Figure 14.2 with the four cluster solution indicated, shows the respondents in terms of the recreational environments they preferred. The respondents in cluster (a) liked all, or almost all, the photographs; none of the groups identified in Figure 14.1 was significantly under-represented. Of the 26 individuals in this group, six chose all the photographs as representative of 'the sort of places they like to visit'.

Cluster (b) was composed of respondents who preferred both the 'built environment' and the 'dispersed' recreation environments; they did not choose the photographs of places used intensively for countryside recreation. Cluster (c) represents those individuals who chose only the 'dispersed' recreational environments, and there was a sub-group of those respondents who preferred only the photographs in the 'remote and dispersed' recreation environments. These respondents comprised a sub-group of cluster 3 (Figure 14.1) which was identified at an earlier stage of cluster analysis. These were respondents 14, 15, 18, 34, 35, 37, 40, 62, 63, 75 and 76. The fourth group (d) comprised 19 respondents whose preferences did not fit into any of the groups identified by

multivariate analysis; idiosyncratic preferences must have influenced their choice. However, members of this last group chose fewer photographs on average than the others and, since it is debatable whether, for instance, two photographs represent membership of a group, they cannot be fitted into the overall pattern.

The first dimension can be tentatively interpreted as differentiating those who preferred (among other recreation environments) the built environment from those scenes without obvious recreational use or management. The second dimension reflects the range of preferences, from all groups of photographs (and all or most of the pictures) to only one group (and consequently few photographs). It also appears to discriminate between those who preferred environments with a high level of recreational use or facilities and those who chose environments without those characteristics.

Table 14.17 shows the socio-economic characteristics of those respondents who were situated high or low on these dimensions. Preference for only 'dispersed' use environments was mainly among younger respondents, while those in the middle age group tended to prefer all environments or all but intensively-used use environments. It was predominantly those who were unmarried or had no children who chose the first type of environment, while those respondents with older children were over-represented among the second group, and those with younger children predominated among the third group. Differences attributed to sex were also notable between these groups, confirming the previous results showing

Table 14.17 Respondent groups from multivariate analysis identified as having expressed different preferences for photographs by socio-economic variables (n=80)

| Socio-economic variables | Groups of respondents with different preferences for photographs: like only dispersed use | like all but intensive use | like all photographs | no groups preferred |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Percentage of respondents in group | | | |
| 14 to 29 years | 56 | 25 | 27 | 25 |
| 30 to 54 years | 22 | 44 | 46 | 30 |
| 55 years plus | 22 | 31 | 27 | 45 |
| Without children | 83 | 50 | 54 | 75 |
| With children under 10 | 6 | 19 | 31 | 15 |
| With children 10 and over | 11 | 31 | 15 | 10 |
| Male | 67 | 50 | 35 | 70 |
| Female | 33 | 50 | 65 | 30 |
| Occupational status I | 17 | 19 | 23 | 5 |
| Occupational status II | 22 | 31 | 23 | 10 |
| Occupational status III | 33 | 38 | 19 | 30 |
| Occupational status IV/V | 28 | 12 | 35 | 55 |
| Minimum education | 44 | 44 | 35 | 85 |
| School only | 17 | 19 | 58 | 5 |
| Further education | 39 | 38 | 8 | 10 |
| Car owner | 33 | 44 | 46 | 25 |
| No car | 61 | 56 | 54 | 70 |
| Low score on Scale 1 | 28 | 19 | 38 | 55 |
| High score on Scale 1 | 72 | 81 | 62 | 45 |
| Low score on Scale 2 | 33 | 25 | 54 | 40 |
| High score on Scale 2 | 67 | 75 | 46 | 60 |

For relationship with sex: $X^2$ = 7.253 with 3 df; p = 0.0643
Relationship with education: $X^2$ inappropriate as more than 20 percent of cells have expected frequency less than 5; Cramers V = 0.416

differences in perception and preferences between men and women. Respondents with increased preference for the first two groups tended to be more likely to have been educated to tertiary level, while the finding from Table 14.6 is borne out by the greater preference for all groups by those who completed only school

education. Scores on attitude scale One showed little difference but there was a marked difference in scores on scale Two, with those who liked all environments more likely to score lower on that scale.

Most interesting, however is the composition of the cluster of respondents whose preferences did not fit clearly into the general pattern of environmental types. Members of this group tended to be older, did not have children, tended to be male, were drawn mostly from occupational classes IV and V, and had a low level of education, a low rate of car ownership and low scores on both attitude scales. These characteristics imply that these respondents have a low frequency of visiting the countryside (Fitton, 1978) and it is difficult to escape the conclusion that a considerable degree of unfamiliarity with the countryside is responsible for this particular mode of perception of the countryside. This also implies that the distinct patterns of perception and preference evident among the other respondents are due to the familiarity of those respondents with those particular types of countryside environment.

The MDS plot for photographs disliked by respondents produced an identical pattern to that obtained from the scaling of preferences (Figure 14.3). This again implies that photographs of disliked environments were perceived in terms of groups or types of disliked recreational environment. The cluster solution was again stable and the three cluster level corresponds with the MDS result.

Figure 14.4 reveals how respondents cluster in terms of their

Figure 14.3 MDS plot of photographs representing disliked recreation environments, by respondents

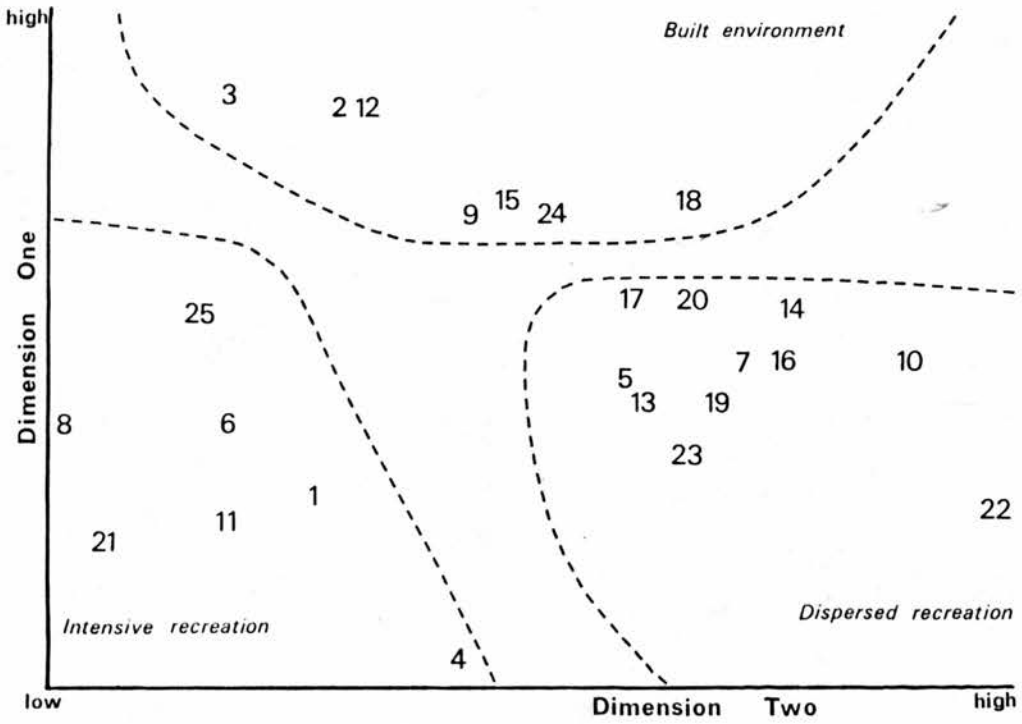
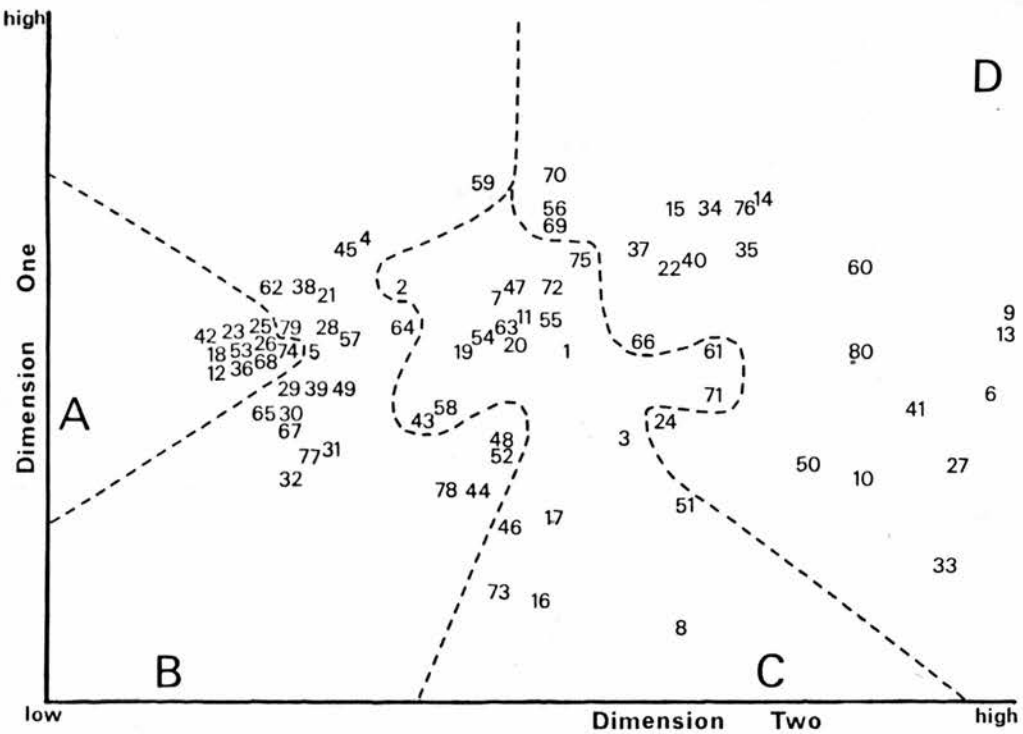



Figure 14.4 MDS plot of respondents, by photographs representing disliked recreation environments



dislike of certain recreational environments. The three-cluster solution was stable. The groups correspond fairly closely with those identified in Figure 14.2: the first cluster, (a), represents 'no dislikes'; the second group, (b), contains those respondents who had either idiosyncratic dislikes or had so few dislikes that the analysis could not assign them to any one group; (c) comprises those respondents who dis-liked intensively-used recreational environments; and the fourth group (d) disliked those environments with intensive recreational use and the built environment. Those respondents whose preferences did not fit into these groups were included in the three groups in Figure 14.4; thus all dislikes were based on the pattern of environmental types shown in Figures 14.1 and 14.3.

The characteristics of respondents in these groups can be seen in Table 14.18. It may be seen that the age/lifecycle, sex, education and attitude scale variables differentiated between respondents in the three groups, and the relationship with education was significant at the 1 percent level. Those who disliked the first group (intensive recreational environments and buildings) tended to be younger, not to have children, and were also slightly more likely to be male. Those who disliked only groups of people (group two) were slightly more likely to be male and appeared to be over-represented in the further education category. Those who had no dislikes were more likely to have younger children, tended to be female, were over-represented in occupational classes IV and V and were also more likely to have completed only school education. This group also tended to score lower on the attitude scales,

Table 14.18 Respondent groups from multivariate analysis identified as having expressed different dislikes of photographs, by socio-economic variables (n=80)

| Socio-economic variables | Groups of respondents who expressed dislikes for photographs: dislike intensive use and buildings | dislike only intensive use | no dislikes |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Percentage of respondents | | |
| 14 to 29 years | 44 | 30 | 26 |
| 30 to 54 years | 26 | 39 | 41 |
| 55 years plus | 30 | 30 | 32 |
| Without children | 83 | 56 | 59 |
| With children under 10 | 13 | 17 | 24 |
| With children 10 and over | 4 | 26 | 18 |
| Male | 65 | 61 | 41 |
| Female | 35 | 39 | 59 |
| Occupational group I | 13 | 17 | 18 |
| Occupational group II | 13 | 26 | 24 |
| Occupational group III | 39 | 35 | 18 |
| Occupational group IV/V | 35 | 22 | 41 |
| Minimum education | 65 | 48 | 44 |
| School only | 9 | 17 | 47 |
| Further education | 26 | 35 | 9 |
| Car owner | 35 | 39 | 38 |
| No car | 57 | 61 | 62 |
| Low score on Scale 1 | 39 | 26 | 41 |
| High score on Scale 1 | 61 | 74 | 59 |
| Low score on Scale 2 | 35 | 30 | 50 |
| High score on Scale 2 | 65 | 70 | 50 |

Relationship with education: $X^2 = 14.51$ with 4 df; $p = 0.0058$

particularly on scale Two, which measured attitude to other people.

The first dimension appears to differentiate those who dislike only intensively-used or developed recreational environments from those who dislike both the latter and the built environment. The second dimension distinguishes between those who expressed no dislikes in terms of clusters (and thus few or no dislikes of individual

photographs) and those who disliked one or more clusters (and thus disliked many photographs). This represents a range from a lack of dislike for any recreational environment to dislikes for specific environments, particularly those which are either used intensively for recreation or have evidence of recreational provision or of the built environment in the country.

Multivariate analysis of the constructs used by respondents in the Sorting Task proved to be disappointing, because the solutions diverged considerably and were difficult to interpret in any meaningful way. Many of the constructs were purely descriptive and most of the frequently cited constructs fell into this category. Both MDS and cluster analysis identified clusters of the most popular and less popular constructs, and thus the analysis appeared to reflect popularity alone. However, the solutions reached were not stable and diverged to a considerable degree. It was therefore considered that, in view of these difficulties, the classification already used (Table 14.3) provided sufficient information and that the presentation and interpretation of the results of multivariate analysis of construct data would not yield any useful results.

**Conclusion**

The major dimensions of variation relating to perception of the countryside and preference for different recreational environments have been identified in this chapter. Important aspects of different individuals' perceptions of the countryside are summarised by the five condensed construct categories. Groups of individuals have been identified in the sample who have preferences

for different types of recreational environment, and it has been possible to examine the socio-economic characteristics of these respondents in detail. These groups are differentiated in terms of educational attainment, age/lifecycle, sex, attitude and occupational group. These results also confirm the attitudinal findings presented in Chapter Thirteen. In the following chapter the results from this chapter and the two previous ones will be drawn together and their implications discussed.

## 15: Cognition and behaviour: summary of results

This chapter presents a summary of the findings from the questionnaire survey.

### (a) Recreational behaviour

The most frequently visited types of place were open country, country villages, the beach (countryside coast), places of historic interest, country pubs and fairs/markets/similar events. These do not include any places specifically managed for recreation, with the possible exception of places of historic interest and the last named; country parks were ranked seventh. This finding could well reflect the pattern of recreational opportunities in south-east Scotland and cannot be accepted as indicative of preference for such facilities. No clearly defined structure was identified among these variables by multivariate analysis.

Some relationships were found between socio-economic and behavioural variables. Age had a marked influence in differentiating recreational behaviour, as did score on the attitude scales; less consistent relationships occurred with car ownership and sex (see Tables 12.2, 12.3, 12.4, 12.5, 12.7, 12.9). It could be tentatively suggested from the results of multivariate analysis that younger people tend to visit a wider variety of places, but this relationship was insufficiently marked to uphold the conclusion that the type of place visited in the country (as defined in this study) is clearly differentiated by the characteristics of visitors. However, this finding is perhaps unsurprising, since similar types of environment in the countryside

may be perceived differently by different people, and will therefore vary in the sort of experiences and satisfactions they provide.

The most popular pursuits were those which make up what is known as 'informal' recreation: walking, picnicking, doing nothing, and playing informal games. There was a sharp drop in popularity dividing these from the 'active' pursuits (see Table 12.2). Recreational pursuits thus exhibit the 'active/passive' distinction found by the Tourism and Recreation Research Unit (1977). Individuals appear to participate in either only passive, or both active and passive pursuits. The latter group were more likely to be younger and male than the former. However, multivariate analysis was not conclusive on this point (Figures 12.3, 12.4). The most important independent variable in relation to behaviour was age (Table 12.4).

This evidence does not uphold the proposition that some people, by means of expressed behaviour, have an interest in intensive, facility oriented recreation. The point made above, however, that both recreational pursuits and places in the countryside may vary in the experiences they provide and in the way they are perceived, indicates that expressed behaviour, classified in this rather crude manner, cannot tell us a great deal about differences in recreational choice and satisfaction.

This interpretation is supported by the fact that attitudes were related to behaviour (Table 12.9), and by the evidence presented by Burton (1974) and Glyptis (1981) concerning the observed behaviour

of visitors in the countryside. The most important influence on choice of recreational pursuit is position in the lifecycle, notably the choice of country parks and the beach by those with young children, and the preference for active pursuits by younger people.

**(b) Perceived reasons for the enjoyment of the country**

The most popular reasons for enjoyment of the country were the scenery and peace and quiet, followed by the fresh air and the sense of freedom. These reasons were considerably more popular than any of the other reasons, and the first two were separated from the others by a significant margin (see Table 13.1). These reasons all relate to characteristics inherent in the countryside environment, and there is little doubt that, expressed in this way, the countryside itself is the most important aspect of the recreation experience, and other factors (for instance social or family reasons) are clearly much less important. No clear multivariate structure was identified in the response pattern other than a reflection of the order of popularity of the reasons, a finding which highlights the widely held nature of these perceptions of the countryside (see Figures 13.1, 13.2). Only age and position on the attitude scale showed any consistent relationship with the perceptual variables.

**(c) Attitudes to countryside recreation**

The majority of attitude items discriminated evenly, separating respondents into two groups; those who favoured quiet recreation, getting away from people and minimal provision, and those who

preferred places that attracted people and increased provision. A larger group of respondents tended to agree with what might be considered normative aspects of countryside behaviour; considerably fewer disagreed with these statements. The pattern found by multivariate analysis confirmed these groupings (see Table 13.7 and Figures 13.3, 13.4).

A pattern of socio-economic characteristics appeared to underlie this group structure. Social class, age and lifecycle position were related to attitude: the former in particular to level of tolerance of other people, the latter two to attitudes expressing preference for increased provision of recreation facilities (see Tables 13.8, 13.11, 13.12). Respondents without access to cars, and also those with children under the age of ten particularly expressed preferences for increased provision (Tables 13.10, 13.12). Overall response to the attitude statements as expressed by summed scores on the attitude scale was related to social class and age, with the higher social groups and greater age related positively to high scores on the scales (indicating agreement with 'traditional' values of recreation; see Table 13.8, 13.12).

**(d) Photograph sorting**

A majority of the descriptions or constructs produced by the sorting task simply reflected the content of the photographs (see Table 14.2). This implies that, for many respondents, attributes other than the immediate content of the photographs were of little significance. However, for a proportion of the sample, constructs reflecting presence of other people and recreational facilities were important. The former were cited predominantly by

respondents in the upper social groups, and this lends support to the results presented earlier (Table 14.4). These and other attributes cited were related to educational attainment and this lends support to the hypothesis that the sorting task is affected to some degree by educational ability, particularly the ability to articulate one's ideas and feelings (Table 14.7). The constructs were further classified under five headings which appeared to summarise adequately the range of respondents' perceptions: a) purely descriptive, b) those relating to numbers of people, c) artificial facilities and recreational provision, d) life/no life, e) other attributes.

**(e) Photograph preferences**

Results of the simple preference choices of photographs showed that the most preferred photographs were those of pastoral countryside, parkland and woodland paths (Table 14.1). The least preferred photographs were invariably those showing large numbers of people in intensive recreation settings; nevertheless, around one third of the sample still expressed a clear preference for those photographs. Multivariate analysis of these preferences (see Figures 14.1, 14.2) showed that three groups of respondents could be classified as having similar preferences: those who liked all the photographs, those who chose all but the most intensively used environments, and those who preferred only the dispersed and remote recreation environments. Four groups of respondents were identified as having similar dislikes (Figures 14.3, 14.4). One group expressed no dislikes; one group had few dislikes which could not be fitted into any clear group identified by the scaling of

preferences; and the other two groups corresponded with the last two preference groups. The patterns of relationship with social class and age/lifecycle position were in accord with those presented for the other variables measuring cognition: those in the higher social groups were more likely to express preference for remote and dispersed recreation environments, whereas those respondents with young children tended to express a dislike for the latter environments and a preference for more intensive recreation facilities (see Tables 14.5, 14.9, 14.10).

**(f) Age/lifecycle position**

The importance of age and position in the lifecycle as factors related to cognition and behaviour is clearly demonstrated by the strength of the relationships with all of the dependent variables. Age and lifecycle position are treated here as one variable since they are both manifestations of the same process, namely the family lifecycle.

In general those respondents with children under the age of ten appear to favour increased provision for recreation; they make more visits to country parks and the beach, and show a preference for more intensive recreation environments. Those in the 14 to 29 age group are more involved in the most active pursuits and tend not to favour quiet recreation as strongly as older people. The 55 plus age group appear to participate in the least active pursuits most frequently, and hold attitudes favouring passive, peaceful and quiet recreation.

**(g) Occupational class**

No relationships were found between occupational class and recreational behaviour, nor with perceived reasons for liking the countryside. This is of considerable interest since occupational class is a strong indicator of propensity to visit the countryside through affluence and consequently personal mobility. Strong and consistent relationships were found, however, between occupational class and many of the other cognitive variables. Those in the upper social groups were more likely to hold attitudes which indicated low tolerance for other people and favouring close contact with nature, while the lower social groups tended to hold opposite attitudes and favoured increased recreational provision. High scores on both the attitude scales were strongly related to membership of occupational groups I and II. These results were supported by the relationships found between preferences for photographs, constructs and occupational class, which confirmed the nature and direction of the relationship. These results support the hypothesis that occupational class is related to cognition: that perceptions tend to differ between the upper and lower social groups, and that the main dimensions of these attitudes appear to be tolerance of other people and belief in the necessity of close contact with nature without the intervention of artificial recreation facilities.

**(h) Education**

Few variables showed any clear relationship with education level and the hypothesized parallels with occupational class did not appear. Overall there was a lack of consistency in the nature and

direction of the relationships. As might be expected, visiting nature trails and the pursuit of nature study were positively related to a higher level of educational attainment, and those who participated in a wide range of both active and passive pursuits were more likely to be highly educated (Tables 12.6, 12.11). Score on the attitude scales showed no relationship to education, but there was a strong relationship between the constructs obtained and educational attainment (Tables 13.9, 14.7). Since the relationship with education did not occur in the attitudinal data, it appears that the data collected by means of the sorting task is partly a reflection of respondents' intelligence, education and ability for self-expression. Preferences for photographs were related to educational attainment but this relationship was both less consistent and less clearly marked. These findings do not support the hypothesis that level of educational attainment is related to attitudes or behaviour, but the results do provide evidence to support the hypothesis that cognition (in general) is influenced by education.

**(i) Car ownership**

Ownership of a private car, or access to one, did not appear to be related to either behaviour or cognition in a strong or consistent manner. Car ownership was negatively related to certain activities (visiting wildlife/safari parks, playing informal games, doing nothing; see Table 12.5) while those who did not own cars or did not have access were slightly more likely to hold attitudes favouring increased recreational provision in the countryside (Table 13.10). However no clear or consistent relationship appeared to exist with

the other perceptual variables and thus the data do not support the hypothesis that car ownership influences either behaviour or cognition in countryside recreation. Thus, as both Sidaway (1982a) and Duffield (1982) have observed, the effect of car ownership is largely on propensity to visit the countryside; cognition and behaviour in the countryside are influenced by other, more subtle processes.

**(j) Male/female differences**

Some differences were found in patterns of behavioural variation between men and women, notably that men were more likely to play sports, whereas women were more likely to visit teashops or fairs, markets and similar events (Table 12.7). Men showed a greater tendency to choose the reasons 'relaxation' and 'develop skills and interests' than women (Table 13.5). Response to the attitude statements indicated that women were less likely to prefer quiet, solitary recreation, and the photograph preferences and constructs supported these findings, with female respondents not expressing strong preferences for any of the 'dispersed environment' type of photograph (Tables 13.13, 14.12, 14.13). This relationship was strong, but it was not consistent among the attitudinal variables, since not all the relevant variables showed the relationship. However, it may be concluded that the data support the hypothesis that there is a difference between male and female cognitive structures, a finding which is in accord with results obtained by Walker (1978) and Hawes (1978).

**(k) Countryside socialisation variables**

The only relationship of note here was between residence in the

country as an adult, and preference for dispersed types of recreation environments (14.14). This finding was not supported consistently by the other attitudinal variables, however, and thus cannot be treated as conclusive. The other socialisation variables, namely frequency of countryside visiting as a child, whether holidays were taken in the country as a child and whether the respondent had lived in the country as a child, showed no consistent relationships with any of the dependent variables, apart from the fact that those who had lived in the country as a child or as an adult were more likely to visit people in the country and farms (Table 12.8). Therefore the hypothesis that countryside socialisation, as measured here, is positively related to behaviour and cognition was not supported by the data.

**(1) Attitude scale scores**

Respondents' scores on both attitude scales were used as independent variables to examine the effects of attitude on behaviour, and as a cross-check on the other cognitive variables. Scale 1, it will be recalled, measured overall attitudes to the use of the countryside for leisure purposes, and scale 2 measured attitude to other people in the countryside. Although not all the behavioural variables showed a relationship with attitude scale scores, a considerable number did and these were in the expected direction (Table 12.9). Two in particular were of interest: country parks were visited by people with both high and low scores, and those going on picnics tended to score low on the scales. The former finding suggests that the two groups of people had different perceptions of country parks, and thus perhaps visited such parks

for different purposes. Attitude also differentiated those individuals who were identified by multivariate analysis as visiting a large variety of different places: these individuals tended to have lower scores (Table 12.10).

Perceived reasons were also influenced by attitude scale scores, although the three most frequently quoted reasons were not related to attitude. 'Sense of freedom' and 'open spaces' were chosen more often by those respondents with high scores, whereas family and social reasons, together with 'I enjoy driving in the country' and 'it's nicer in the country than the city' were related to low scores (Table 13.6). Attitude scores were also strongly related to the condensed construct categories (see Table 14.15) and the preferences for photographs consistently reflected the expected relationships (Table 14.16). Attitude scores were also strongly related to social class (Scale 1 relationship was significant at the 1 per cent level, and the Scale 2 relationship was significant at the 5 per cent level; see Table 13.8). Educational attainment showed no relationship with scores on the attitude scales. Stage in the lifecycle, however, was related to the attitude scores, with the 14 to 29 age group and those with children under ten more likely to have low scores (Tables 13.9, 13.11).

These findings support the hypothesis that attitudes are related to some aspects of recreational behaviour, in a manner consistent with the concepts of the 'traditional ideology', and that other aspects of cognition are also related to attitudes. This latter finding, and the statistical significance of the relationships in

Table 14.15, provides evidence that the results of the attitude scale are related to the findings obtained from the sorting task and the photograph preferences, and that these results together provide confirmation of the validity of the cognitive structures held by respondents.

The finding that attitude was related to behaviour (Table 12.9) supports the hypothesis that recreational activity is differentiated according to certain aspects of cognition, and supports the idea that the 'traditional ideology' of countryside recreation is an influence on behaviour. If the classification of behaviour used in this study had been more detailed and had taken a greater variety of factors into account then a stronger pattern of variation in behaviour might well have emerged.

The findings are in accord with those presented by the Tourism and Recreation Research Unit (1977) on behaviour patterns, those on perceived reasons for liking the countryside are consistent with those of Fitton (1978), the Tourism and Recreation Research Unit (1980a; 1980b) and Harrison (1983), and the findings on cognition support those of Burton (1974) with respect to perception of other people and Bacon (1980) with respect to preferences for more intensive recreational provision. There are, however, some important differences from the findings of Palmer et al. (1977) and Harrison (1983) and these will be fully discussed below. The present results (though necessarily only allowing limited generalisation to a larger population), have clarified relationships and patterns of structure in the data which until now were either disputed on methodological grounds or were limited to

specific sites and samples (e.g., Burton, 1974; Palmer et al., 1977). Experimental work with larger samples is still necessary, in order to verify these relationships and to accurately measure the range of variation of the concepts and attitudes involved. Strictly speaking, exploratory work can only produce hypotheses for testing in later research. Nevertheless, despite the absence of verified results and accurate estimates of population parameters, the results obtained here may be treated with confidence, because of the multi-operational research design and the cross-checks built in to the data by a priori theorising and exploratory interviews.

## 16: Conclusions and Discussion

The purpose of this chapter is to draw out the implications of the results in terms of the continuing debate on the nature and extent of recreational provision. A further aim is to critically assess the methodology employed in the study. At this point it is useful to recap on the overall research design and its aims and intentions, in order to place the results in a coherent structure and relate them to matters of policy.

The underlying intention of the research design was to explore the patterns of perception, attitudes and behaviour in countryside recreation in order to identify (a) the basic concepts which describe the recreation experience; (b) the degree to which these concepts vary across the population; and (c) whether any pattern exists with respect to such variation. Within this overall inductive framework, some individual questions have been framed as hypotheses.

The results can now be used to assess the assumptions about people's attitudes and existing provision. As pointed out in the discussion in the opening chapters, there are several varying assumptions. One view holds that low key, dispersed provision is adequate and represents what people want. On the other hand the arguments advanced for countryside theme parks and leisure parks assume that a demand exists for more intensive recreational provision in the countryside. These views are related to the assumptions about people's attitudes. The former view assumes that

attitudes related to the traditional ideology are predominant, the latter that such attitudes are not held by a certain proportion of the recreation market. The 'honeypot' policies which have played an important part in recreation strategy (Brotherton, 1975; Cloke and Park, 1981) require the assumption that those visitors who make use of such facilities hold attitudes that a certain level of provision and management, together with a certain degree of use, are consistent with their image of countryside. The more recent emphasis on access begs the question, 'Access to what kind of countryside?'

The exploratory nature of the results and the size of the sample do not allow conclusive policy recommendations to be made, and replication from different samples is needed to verify the results of multivariate analysis. Nevertheless the findings can be used to make a close scrutiny of the assumptions and to assess their validity.

**Behaviour in the countryside**

It was noted in the summary of results in the previous chapter that the measures of behaviour used were not fully adequate and that although some patterns were discovered, it is likely that the full range of variation was not explored. In view of this limitation of the data, it is not proposed to assess assumptions about recreational behaviour.

**Reasons for enjoyment of the countryside**

The widely held nature of the most important aspects of the countryside experience (i.e., scenery, peace and quiet, fresh air)

is of considerable interest: it discredits the assumption, often made, that different people value the countryside for different reasons. The four most important aspects of the countryside experience (scenery, peace and quiet, fresh air and sense of freedom) are not generally available in an urban environment, and thus it may be concluded that the countryside is appreciated for its intrinsic qualities by all groups in society. Attitudes to environment are formed by complex factors over long periods of time; but our perceptions of the countryside have been conditioned by our recent urban history: the most important reasons for which the countryside is appreciated are all experiences which, by and large, cannot be enjoyed in the town.

**Differences in perception**

The evidence obtained from the attitude statements supports the proposition that different, and quite distinct, attitudes exist towards the use of the countryside for recreation. There appear to be two distinct groups: those who seek quiet recreation away from other people (that is, people other than their own group), and those who seek, or at least tolerate, the presence of other people and the recreational facilities which attract other people. These results appear to contradict those presented above: whereas the most important aspects of the countryside experience are equally appreciated by all sections of society, there are distinctly different attitudes towards the recreational use of the countryside. This apparent contradiction can, however, be explained by the concept of 'relative perception': the meaning of a set of words can vary from one person to another and concepts such as

scenery and peace or quietness are relative, not absolute. The reasons for which the countryside is valued are remarkably similar across the sample; however the means to those ends will vary according to the individual's motivations and interests. The countryside provides certain basic experiences which are shaped by a common urban and industrial environment, but a variety of needs, motivations and interests, together with socio-cultural influences on social behaviour, will result in these experiences being approached in a number of different ways. Therefore, in terms of a desired countryside experience, scenery, peace and quiet, fresh air and a sense of freedom may be achieved in a variety of different ways, and not just through the norms of the traditional ideology.

This conclusion allows the differing results obtained by Palmer et al. (1977), Fitton (1978, 1979) and Harrison (1983) to be evaluated and placed in context. Results obtained by Palmer et al. suggested that the countryside was perceived according to a continuum, from the highly organised and managed recreation sites to the least intensive and most remote sites, whereas Fitton and Harrison presented evidence to suggest that there is broad similarity regarding perceptions of, and preferences for, countryside recreation. On the basis of the theoretical discussion in Chapter Six it is possible to differentiate aspects of cognition into two distinct and complementary aspects, and this approach allows the contradictions between earlier results to be resolved: each of the former studies was concerned with only one of these separate dimensions of cognition.

Since the most important reasons for enjoyment of the countryside appear to be unrelated to the attitudes towards its use for recreation (see Table 13.6), it follows that attempts to assess either existing or future provision on the basis of surveys using only the former data will be inadequate. Response to questions concerning what people like about the countryside will not reveal important differences in attitudes and preferences. The attitude position held by those responsible for provision may also unconsciously be used to interpret the evidence in a value-laden way. It should therefore not be assumed that, since a respondent in a survey states that he or she appreciates the countryside for the peace and quiet, he or she will necessarily seek what the reader or anyone else assumes is quiet recreation.

**The traditional ideology**

The concept of the traditional ideology of countryside recreation was discussed in Chapter Two. It will be recalled that this concept entails the existence of normative rules which dictate appropriate modes of conduct in countryside recreation. In particular, these normative rules specify close contact with nature, the appreciation of purely natural values and the necessity for solitude. The attitude statements were intended to measure the degree of acceptance of such values, admittedly in a rather crude fashion. The results of the sorting task and the photograph preferences confirm the validity of the findings from the attitudinal questions, that there are significantly different groups in the sample, with respect to perceptions of and attitudes towards the countryside. These groups are also distinguished by

the same socio-economic characteristics as is response to the attitude statements, and thus the results of the photograph sorting provide evidence of the content validity of the scale concepts, and support the formation of the attitude scale. Although the scale still requires refinement in the form of rewording some items, and omitting others which do not discriminate clearly on the basis of the underlying concepts, the consistent way in which the items discriminate among the sample provides evidence of its appropriateness in its present form.

The fact that some of the items received widespread agreement supports the proposition that normative aspects of countryside recreation behaviour do exist, and some of these statements appear to reflect a diluted version of the traditional ideology. These statements relate to finding 'quiet uncrowded places to visit', thinking 'it's important to go for a walk', thinking 'there's a right and a wrong way to behave in the country', thinking the country 'is more interesting than the city' and visiting places where there's 'something interesting to see'. Those statements which present strongly worded versions of the traditional ideology discriminate fairly evenly; these concern attitudes to other people and the provision of recreational facilities. In Chapter Six it was proposed that either a diluted version of the traditional ideology exists, or people hold views based on the traditional ideology but have different means of achieving these goals, or that a completely different attitude set is held by some individuals. The results of the attitude scaling suggest that normative aspects of the traditional ideology clearly do exist, and these can be

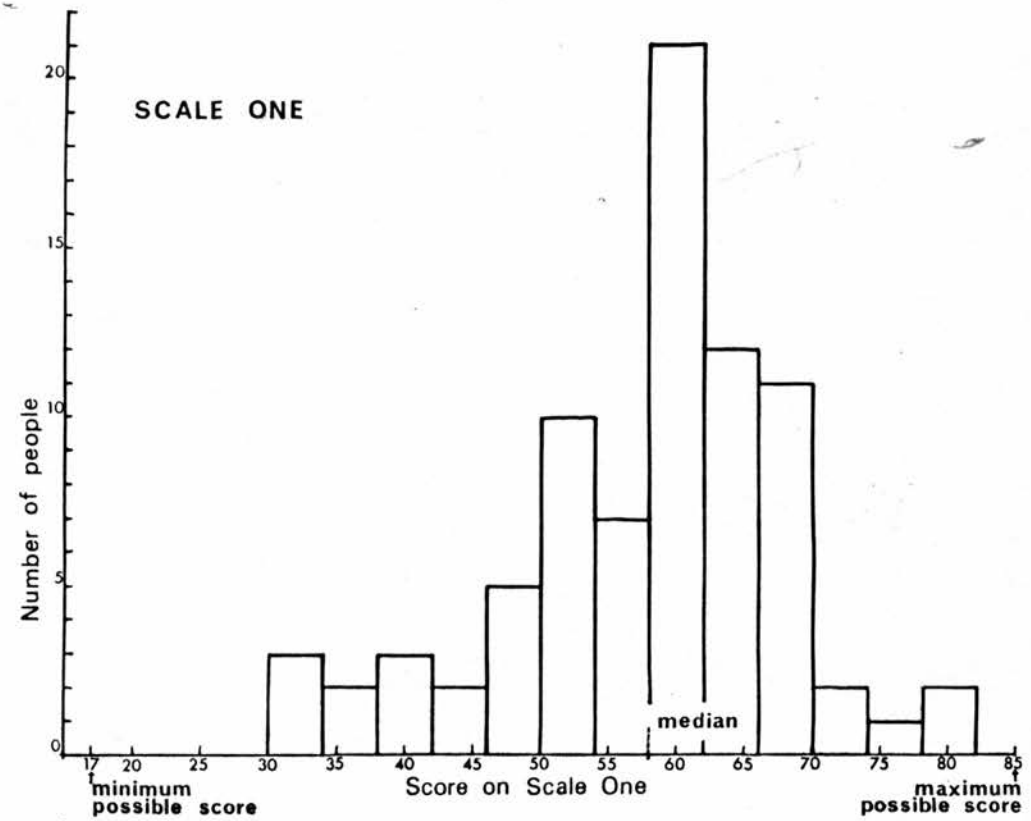
regarded as a diluted version of the beliefs involved in the ideology. The results from the checklist of motivations indicate that different people have different means of achieving these goals.

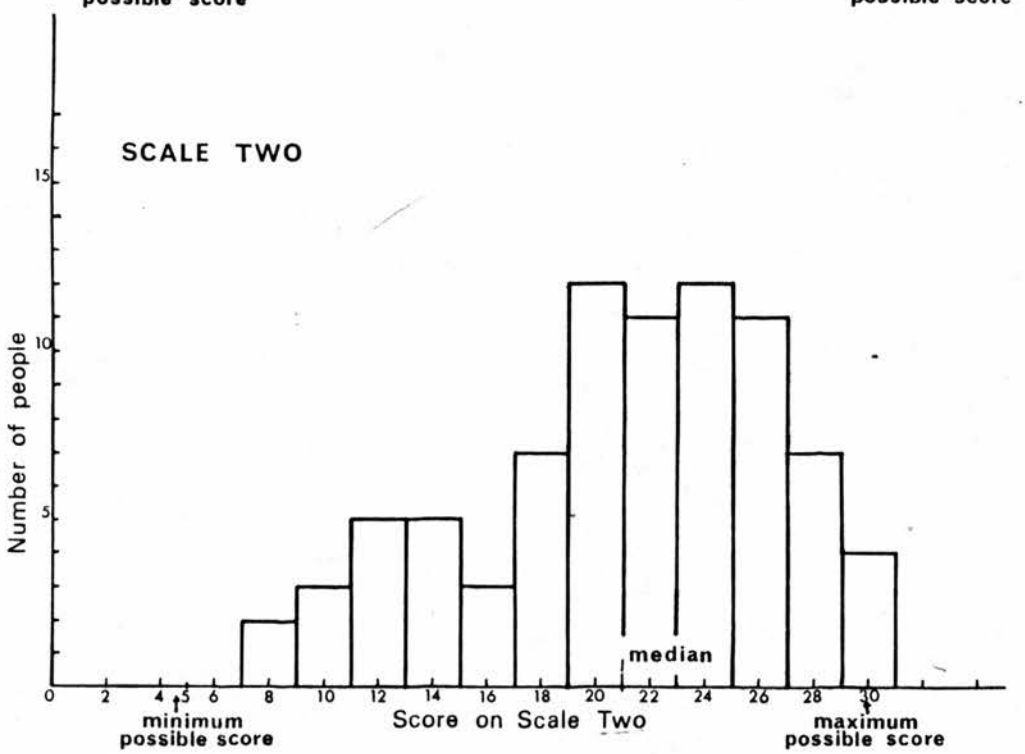
From Figure 16.1 it may be seen that, for both scales, the majority of respondents lie above the median score; this finding is slightly more marked for scale 2 (65 percent of the sample scored more than the median on scale 1, 72 percent on scale 2). This evidence indicates that attitudes based on the traditional ideology are generally widespread, but a significant minority of the sample subscribes to opposing beliefs. Very high scores on both scales, indicating very strongly held views, are infrequent, in particular with respect to scale 1. It may thus be concluded that strong adherence to the values of the traditional ideology is the preserve of a relative minority. Indeed, a majority hold views which are relatively close to the median, indicating moderate attitudes which may be described as a dilute version of the traditional ideology.

**Individual cognitive structure**

The results of the sorting task show that whereas some respondents differentiated the countryside on the basis of certain perceived attributes, others did not. Similarly the results of the photograph preferences indicate that some respondents liked or disliked certain environments on the basis of particular attributes, but for other respondents these attributes were of no importance. Indeed, some respondents expressed a preference for all types of environment. For those respondents who distinguished

Figure 16.1 Frequency distribution of respondents scores on the attitude scales



between various environments on the basis of recreational provision and numbers of people, the data indicate that their perceptions are arranged along a continuum. This dimension of perception ranges from the concept of intensively used recreation places, often with recreation facilities which are perceived to attract people, to the opposite pole of the least intensively used recreation places with little or no provision. The attitude scale clearly represents this continuum.

However, this dimensional basis of percerption does not appear to exist for those individuals who cited only descriptive constructs or expressed a preference for all types of recreation environments. This clearly implies that these respondents did not base their perceptions of countryside recreation environments on concepts of crowding or degree of provision. For these respondents, the data lead to the conclusion is that the countryside is perceived as a whole, and different countryside environments are not distinguished by the degree of a particular attribute they may or may not possess (other than perhaps scenic quality, which was not measured here). This conclusion is also supported by the qualitative evidence presented in Chapter Eleven.

Therefore, there appear to be two distinct groups of people with rather different perceptual structures. The first group arrange their perceptions of countryside environments according to a dimension based on degree of crowding and recreational provision. Those respondents whose attitudes lie at one extreme will seek intensively used environments (for instance, those respondents who cited the 'places with life' construct). Those at the other

extreme will avoid such environments and choose less crowded places. Those in the second group, however, do not perceive such differences between environments; from what the data tell us (and to an extent this is necessarily more limited information than that obtained from the first group, since individuals in the former group appear to be more articulate and better educated) these respondents perceive the countryside in basically very simple terms. They include those aspects of the countryside which, as has already been shown, all respondents consider to be important; beyond that there is little clear structure evident. A lack of knowledge and familiarity with the countryside appears to be partly responsible for this perceptual structure (see Table 14.17) but it is not clear whether everyone would necessarily adopt a bipolar perceptual structure of the type described, given the necessary degree of experience of the countryside. These results put into context the findings presented by Palmer et al. (1977); their conclusion, that perception of the countryside is structured by a continuum from developed to undeveloped recreation sites, is valid for their sample, which was drawn exclusively from one social stratum only. The results presented in the previous chapters have demonstrated (see Tables 13.8, 14.4, 14.5) that social class is related to the nature of the perceptual system.

**Explanation**

Whereas the conclusions which may be drawn from the results are, or at least should be, controlled by logic and the rules of statistical inference, the explanation of these results in terms of some other factors lies in the realms of theory and speculation. It

was observed in the literature review that the reliance of many existing studies on analyses demonstrating relationships between socio-economic characteristics and participation or cognition variables led to an over-emphasis on the explanatory value of the socio-economic variables. Since the latter variables cannot explain behaviour or attitudes, understanding of the processes underlying these phenomena is not achieved. Therefore in the discussion which follows, socio-economic characteristics are assumed to be related to underlying motivations which influence behaviour and attitude rather than directly related to behaviour or cognition.

Lifecycle and socio-cultural influences appear to be the most important independent variables related to cognition: the results presented in the previous four chapters have borne out the influence of these variables. This interpretation is in accord with the explanation of cognition and behaviour proposed in Chapter Six. Family lifecycle theory (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1975) gives a plausible explanation of how position in the lifecycle affects principal recreation needs and interests, and how these will be reflected in activities.

Young people, in the pre-marital stage of the lifecycle, are most likely to seek sociable activities, excitement and stimulation. This is illustrated by the fact that the descriptive construct 'no life' was cited almost exclusively by the 14 to 29 age group (Tables 14.9, 14.11). Hence individuals from this age group are most likely to show a preference for gregarious and intensive recreation environments. Those with children under ten are more

likely to seek recreation environments with suitable activities for children of that age, and such environments are again likely to be gregarious and intensively used, and centred around the provision of facilities for recreation. Those families with the youngest child over the age of ten are more likely to avoid such places. Finally those in the 55 plus age group will be most likely to seek passive, dispersed recreation since people in this lifecycle group tend to have consolidated their social relationships, and are also least likely to seek active, energetic recreation. The results therefore clearly support the hypothesis that position in the family lifecycle will influence recreational behaviour in, and cognition of, the countryside. As pointed out above, the relationship may be explained by the existence of particular motivations experienced by those in different stages of the lifecycle. The evidence in tables 13.2 and 13.3 showed clearly that motivations were related to position in the lifecycle and age.

Differences between male and female respondents appear to influence some aspects of behaviour and cognition: female roles appear to require company and dislike wildness and remoteness. This finding can be explained by the stronger motivations for social contact, gregariousness and greater pre-occupation with children and family among women (Hawes, 1978).

The relationship between occupational class and cognition is rather more difficult to explain. Since there was no relationship between the behavioural variables and occupational grouping, a constraint model based on affluence and mobility cannot be used to explain the influence of social class (see Tables 13.10, 14.8). Nor can the

effects of social class on cognition be explained through the medium of education: the influence of education is marked in the case of the perceptual variables, but not for the attitudinal variables (see Tables 13.9, 14.6, 14.7). The effects of socialisation through the education system can thus largely be discounted, and another explanation must be sought. Social class is largely a reflection of income and related aspirations, expectations and values. Thus it would appear that the differences in cognitive processes must stem from some aspect of these income-related characteristics, which themselves arise from the structure of society.

Burton's (1974) research found similar patterns of relationship between perception and social class. Yapp (1979) developed a theoretical argument, based on Cheek (1972) and Lee (1972), and suggested that different social groups perceive public and private open space differently. According to this explanation certain public spaces in the countryside will be avoided by some groups since these spaces are sources of value conflict with individuals who do not share the same values concerning those spaces.

An alternative explanation may be based on the concept of the traditional ideology of countryside recreation, which suggests that there is an appropriate way to behave in the countryside and, in particular, that the countryside experience involves (or ought to involve) solitude. These values have been socialised through specific channels and have diffused through the upper social groups from the social elites of the nineteenth century to a much wider

cross-section of society today.

It is quite likely, however, that these different explanations operate together, in varying degrees. It has been argued in Chapter Six that attitudes to places in general, and countryside space in particular, are controlled by a system of ascribed meanings which are generated and shared by certain groups in society. Cultural or historic attitudes to countryside and leisure, such as 'traditional' countryside values, together with perceptions of the attributes of places are likely to play a crucial role in producing this system of meaning, and these influences will vary in importance for different social groups.

**Policy Implications**

Drawing out policy implications in an area such as countryside recreation can be fraught with peril: assumptions and value judgments can easily lead to different conclusions being drawn from the same data. In the present case, the limitations of the methodology, together with considerations such as the size of the sample and the exploratory nature of the research design, require that the reliability of the results must necessarily wait for replication from other studies. Furthermore, unlike applied research which may be aimed at answering specific policy questions, this project is directed at a larger and more diffuse problem area. Hence any recommendations to be made for the direction of policy will necessarily be large-scale and general, rather than problem-oriented and specific. One particular assumption necessary here is that individuals will act in accordance with their cognitive processes. This question has already been discussed earlier, in

Chapter Six: the results presented in Table 12.9 provide evidence to support the contention that attitudes are related to behaviour and thus the assumption is tenable.

The limitations of the questions on behaviour indicate that these results cannot be used to make statements about behavioural preferences, whether towards intensive, facility-oriented recreation activities or otherwise. However, the results show clearly that although there is little difference in the sample with respect to the most important features enjoyed about the countryside, there are considerable differences in the way that recreational use of the countryside is perceived. The response to the attitude statements showed that a desire for increased recreation provision does exist (see Table 13.7). The different attitude and preference groups identified through the use of the attitude scale and the sorting task also point to the variety of possible approaches to the countryside recreation experience.

The most important conclusion to be drawn from this evidence is the need for provision to facilitate a wide variety of different types of experience from those where the countryside experience itself is paramount, to those where the countryside merely provides a pleasant backdrop to social interactions and other activities. That aspect of policy which aims to facilitate access for underprivileged or deprived groups should take into account the variety of ways in which the countryside is enjoyed and market the countryside experience accordingly. The increased emphasis on access per se and on opening up the countryside is supported by the

evidence which shows that a large proportion of the sample prefer to enjoy the countryside in a direct and immediate way. Consequently, there is a clear demand for access to countryside for dispersed, low-key recreation.

Although the data collected did not examine alternative forms of provision in detail, and respondents were not questioned on specific aspects of preferred facilities, it is possible to conclude from the findings that single-use, intensive recreation projects in a countryside setting would undoubtedly find a ready market. This conclusion is also in accord with the conceptual basis of the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum, which was discussed in Chapter Six.

However, it should be borne in mind that those groups in society which expressed the attitudes and preferences which lead to this latter conclusion tend to be those groups which are most likely to be subject to economic and mobility constraints: those in semi-skilled and unskilled occupational categories, young people and families with young children. Recent research (e.g. Harrison, 1983; Sidaway and Duffield, 1984) has shown that provision in the urban fringe does not greatly improve access for such disadvantaged groups. Consequently, recommendations as to the appropriate location of such facilities are unlikely to resolve this problem. However, a possible solution lies in the approach proposed by Torkildsen (1983), who conceptualises leisure as an integrated process. If provision and management caters for the whole process, rather than seperately for its individual aspects, then the perhaps artificial distinction between countryside and urban

recreation may be discarded, and the park system may be seen as a whole, from urban to national park. Certainly, developments such as the 'green wedges' in the Greater Manchester or Tyneside conurbations point in this direction.

Some recent research (Bacon, 1980; TRRU, 1983) has suggested that the often limited nature of urban park provision does not fulfil the needs of certain social groups, in particular those groups mentioned above, together with the unemployed and ethnic minorities. It would therefore appear reasonable to interpret the need for further provision at a local, urban level first. It was noted in Chapter Two that urban parks were largely a product of the attitudes that contact with nature itself was good for physical health and was morally uplifting, and that therefore the parks should be environments for contact with nature, not environments for activities with nature as a background. The legacy of the nineteenth century has therefore left the present day urban environment with a park infrastructure in need of change (TRRU, 1983). The results presented here indicate that a demand for provision for intensive recreation exists, and it appears from the Tourism and Recreation Research Unit's review that, to start with at least, this might best be met in terms of varied provision for leisure in a rural, or semi-rural setting, but within, or close to, urban areas.

On the other hand, the findings on perception of, and attitudes towards, recreational use of the countryside presented in this study also indicate that many people prefer less gregarious

surroundings and less intensive provision. Many of the typical informal pursuits undertaken in the countryside do not require any specific provision other than access to uncultivated open space or the provision of footpaths in farmland. The argument that policy for recreation should extend its focus from the concentration of visitors in country parks and other honeypots to the opening up of the countryside for more extensive recreation (Shoard, 1979; 1980) is now reflected in recent developments, such as the review of official policy and the current emphasis on access to the countryside as a whole. The perceptions and attitudes of many respondents in this study indicate that there is indeed a demand for that kind of countryside experience which can best be provided for by ensuring extensive access to a variety of landscape types.

The results of this research indicate the range of different perceptions of, and preferences for, recreation environments: these imply the need for provision to facilitate a wide range of possible recreation experiences in a countryside setting. The question of the balance between these aspects of policy may therefore be resolved in terms of a range of provision rather than by an undue emphasis on any one aspect.

**Methodology and Data**

The overall approach to this research project has been an exploratory one, and the methodology has also been used in an exploratory way. Certain limitations of the methodology have emerged in the results. In particular, these are: the lack of social input into measures of behaviour and cognition; the limitations of the measures of behaviour used; the limited

explanatory power of the cognitive and socio-economic variables; and the influence of the research design on the results.

The approach adopted in this study has been based on the perspective of cognition, and has been exploratory both in the sense of overall research design and techniques used. The cognition approach was used because of a conviction that cognition is related to behaviour. However, one of the major failings of the approach is that it does not take behaviour explicitly into account. Furthermore, social influences on behaviour have not been fully incorporated into the research design, and these influences are likely to complicate, or even over-ride the effects of attitude or motivation on behaviour. The measures of behaviour used have not taken these factors into account.

Secondly, the design of the project has been flawed in that the emphasis on an exploratory analysis of all aspects of cognition has not permitted a more detailed examination of the relationships between different aspects of cognition. Furthermore the manner in which cognition influences behaviour has not been addressed in anything other than a very limited way. Questions relating to the link between motivation and behaviour, and attitude and behaviour, and the links between motivation and attitude are all of great interest, but unfortunately the research design has cast only a little light on these questions.

The aim of looking for groups of individuals with similar patterns of cognition or behaviour was limited by the actual design of the project, in that it was not possible to establish relationships

between variables, except by the very crude means of socio-economic characteristics. This limitation has resulted in each cognitive/behavioural variable being dealt with in isolation. Only the use of the summed scores on the scale allowed attitude to be related to the other variables.

A further limitation of the methodology is related to the selection of stimulus items for the structured questions. The qualitative research was used to identify the most important concepts used by individuals to describe the countryside and their experience of it. These concepts were then used in the construction of the checklists, attitude items and photograph techniques. However, since all the structured questions were based on a range of concepts, they only reflected the diversity of perceptions experienced by a certain group of individuals. The qualitative research showed that not all respondents perceived the countryside experience in terms of number of people present, type of facility or norms of behaviour; however the need to present the respondents with a variety of stimulus items meant that these were precisely the concepts that were being measured in the final questionnaire. The fact that the photograph preferences indicated that the range of concepts was inappropriate to some respondents emphasizes this failing of the methodology. Great stress was laid in the early chapters on the dangers of falling into the trap laid by conventional wisdom and everyday modes of thinking, but it appears that these problems have not been successfully overcome. A major criticism of the methodology and research design is therefore that the emphasis on the traditional ideology and the range of attitudes

associated with it has perhaps obscured rather than clarified the nature of the individual cognitive system.

One of the central themes of the methodology has been multi-operationalism: the use of different techniques and methods to confirm the findings.

The qualitative findings have provided support for the results of the qualitative analyses. The different techniques used to collect data on perceptions and attitudes have allowed confirmation of the validity of the findings, while also highlighting problems created by the individual methods. The use of different techniques of analysis has also allowed confirmation of the results of different methods. Consequently the adoption of a multi-operational approach seems to have been justified. The use of qualitative methodology, as presented in Chapter Eleven, had three aims: to identify basic concepts, as input to the design of the main questionnaire and in order to illustrate the quantitative data obtained from the main questionnaire. To an extent these aims were achieved, although the limitations noted above are significant. The decision to limit analysis of the qualitative data in this manner was made as a conscious part of the research design. More complex analysis of this data would have involved much greater emphasis on the qualitative part of the project, including the use of a larger sample, and this was not felt to be justified in view of the scale of the project and the emphasis on the original aim of searching for groups of people with similar patterns of cognition and behaviour.

The items comprising the behavioural checklist showed little

significant differentiation, except in terms of popularity, and were probably the least successful part of the study. The very broad classification used clearly ironed out the more subtle differences in behaviour based on motivation, social influences and cognition. It must be concluded that more precise measures of behaviour are required to take these subtle variations into account.

Participant observation methods are clearly necessary in order to identify what people do, and how such behaviour varies from site to site. Nevertheless, there are significant problems in relating observed behaviour to motivations, cognitions and social factors, in ensuring coverage across a wide range of situations, and also taking into account infrequent users. The former problem may perhaps be overcome by on-site surveys following up observation techniques, the latter by attempting to link household with site surveys in some way.

Secondly the problem of social influences on behaviour must be addressed adequately; the research design used in this study was unable to make much progress in this direction. As mentioned in Chapter Eight, there are a number of methods available to do this. Apart from the participant observation and follow up methods noted above, total household interviewing would have been appropriate to assess the impact of the family group on behaviour. The use of sample design to isolate and examine the effect of peer groups and other social groupings similarly would shed some light on the influence of such groups.

The checklist items relating to reasons for enjoyment of the countryside with hindsight could be further refined. In particular, it is possible that certain items in this checklist tapped some of the dimensions of the attitude scale, since there was a relationship between some items and the attitude scale. However, this checklist appeared to be one of the more successful parts of the study, since it showed that there was little variation among the respondents in terms of the most important aspects of perception of the countryside.

The need for refinement of the attitude scale has been noted above; the scale is, admittedly, a rather crude measure. Rewording of some concepts and omission of others would increase the reliability of the scale. In its present state, the scale has provided a adequate description of attitudes towards recreational use of the countryside, and this is considered a useful step in view of the paucity of research on such attitudes. The use of the photograph sorting task confirmed the validity of the concepts used in the scale. Nevertheless, as pointed out above, it does appear that the scale measured attitudes which are not held by all individuals, and therefore its validity is still open to question. It is perhaps relevant as a description of attitudes held by only a majority, but not all, of the sample.

Although the photographs used in the sorting task represented a wide range of differing environments in the countryside, it has been noted above that because the choice of photographs was partly determined by the concepts of the traditional ideology, they do not represent a truly objective set of stimuli. Nevertheless, the

results of both the photograph sorting and the photograph preferences questions overcame this problem because they succeeded in isolating two groups of respondents: those who related to the range of concepts in some way and those to whom they appeared not to be relevant.

The relationship between educational attainment and constructs obtained from respondents has already been discussed above; this was not considered to be a source of bias for reasons given in Chapter Fourteen. The analysis of photographs relating to each construct proved to be impractical because of the small number of respondents who cited those constructs which would have been of greatest interest in this context. Such an analysis would, however, have been useful, since it would have provided further empirical evidence of relative perception: it would have been possible to compare different constructs used to describe the same photographs, or vice versa. All constructs obtained were classified into five broad categories; this was felt to be a valid step, since the categories were in accord with concepts obtained from the qualitative data.

The use of cross-tabulations with some socio-economic indicators was originally intended to establish whether groups of individuals with similar cognitions were similar in any other way. Although the explanatory power of such indicators is limited, it was expected that any relationship found would be useful in a descriptive way. However, more explicit attempts should have been made to establish relationships with motivations and social influences, rather than

with socio-economic variables. These former variables appear to have greater explanatory power. The relationships between these variables and cognition, as well as behaviour, would be of great interest.

The use of multivariate techniques of analysis proved successful where stable solutions were obtained using a variety of different techniques and where additional evidence supported the findings. In some cases, the techniques did not produce stable solutions and the results did not show any clear pattern of discrete clusters. This is not necessarily a failing of the method, however, but reflects the quality of the data. Multivariate techniques of analysis will always produce a solution, even where a meaningful structure does not exist within the data. In the cases where stable solutions did not occur, it is most likely that the 'noise' or random variation in the data was greater than any pattern or structure. Hence it is reasonable to conclude from such results that no clear structure exists within those data sets (e.g., the analysis of respondents in terms of places visited, reasons for enjoyment of the countryside or constructs cited). In a number of cases, however, it appeared that the data were characterised by dimensions of difference rather than by a clustering of respondents into discrete groups. In those instances, the use of multidimensional scaling was particularly useful since it highlighted these dimensions rather than attempting to force the data into discrete groupings. This consideration, together with the graphic output produced by the method, which allowed a visual interpretation of the results, were the main advantages of MDS.

The use of cluster analysis and MDS together also enabled confirmation of the results.

The size of the sample was the result of a trade-off between reliability of the data on the one hand, and time involved in data collection and processing on the other. The multi-operational nature of the research design was intended to allow verification of the validity of the concepts which the study was intended to explore. Nevertheless, the small size of the sample has reduced the reliability of the results: the study has gone some way towards establishing the most important concepts and cognitive structures involved in perception of the countryside but the extent to which such concepts and structures exist within the population at large may not be judged with the same confidence from these data. A larger sample would have allowed replication of the multivariate results by using several sub-samples drawn from the same data set and the resulting decrease in the standard error associated with any percentage would have increased confidence in the relationships found in cross-tabulation of the data with the independent variables. Analysis of the sets of photographs associated with individual constructs would have also proved more worthwhile with an increased data set; however, a doubling or tripling of the size of the sample would have, at minimum, been necessary to achieve this level of reliability.

**Further research**

The discussion in this chapter has highlighted the problems faced in this study and the limitations of the research design. However, the discussion has also indicated areas where future research would

appear to be profitable. Since these issues have already been addressed in some detail, it is sufficient to summarise them here.

Firstly, there is a need for studies which take the social context explicitly into account; due to the limitations of verbal accounts of behaviour, observation techniques are required. Social influences on behaviour should be addressed directly; questionnaire studies should be aimed at social groups (i.e., the household, peer group etc). Secondly, the motivational basis of behaviour needs to be examined in detail, taking into account the full range of motivational influences, how these arise and how these are expressed.

The relationships between social factors, cognition, motivation and behaviour should furthermore be directly addressed. There is a need for research which can make the link between these factors and observed behaviour. Techniques such as respondent chasing can allow studies to be made both of behaviour and of motivational and cognitive factors, involving the same respondents. Alternatively, patterns of behaviour may be identified in one study and then compared with studies of social, motivational and cognitive influences derived from other samples.

These approaches will also achieve another major goal, which involves the development of improved explanatory and theoretical frameworks. A clearer understanding of behaviour and its social context, and of the factors which influence behaviour will contribute to the development of a theoretical framework which is able to explain leisure behaviour and its causes.

The avenues of research noted above could profitably draw upon some of the tentative findings of this project, in particular the similarities in perception of the countryside and the differences in perception of appropriate recreation activity. Nevertheless greater emphasis on behaviour and social context would illuminate the relative influence of the factors examined in this study. Furthermore since the multivariate methods used in the present study are not based on statistical inference, but require replication from other samples, further work from other samples would be necessary to support the present findings.

At a more general level, preferences for recreation environments and activities are part of a wider perception of, and motivation towards, leisure in general. The artificial distinction between countryside and other forms of leisure may serve to obscure the nature of preferences for leisure activities and experiences. Research should therefore also be aimed at the whole range of appropriate leisure activities associated with the 'day out' or the 'trip', in order to examine perceptions, motivations and preferences, and to place countryside recreation in the general context of all leisure trips.

Finally, a complete change of approach, away from the study of individual behaviour and towards the study of social institutions may well provide a wider framework - so far largely lacking in countryside recreation research - within which to explain both the nature of existing provision and the nature of leisure activity.

The issues raised in the first section of this thesis also require further research. Firstly, a history of attitudes to nature in the recreation and conservation movement in Great Britain, parallel to that work done in the USA by, for instance, Graber (1976), would be of interest. Secondly, a comprehensive review of the inputs to the policy making process would be of value, in order to determine the most important influences at work, and to ascertain the role of traditional values and attitudes in the development of policy.

**Conclusion**

In the first part of this thesis it was suggested that recreational activity in the countryside has too often been approached in policy and research from an aggregate point of view, as a particular set of activities undertaken by a particular type of participant. Furthermore, it was argued that policy was determined largely by the official perception of problems (whether those problems impeded recreational activity, or were caused by it) and that comparatively little effort has been made to ascertain the opinions and preferences of countryside visitors and to understand what kind of behaviour is involved in countryside recreation.

The results of this exploratory survey of attitudes and behaviour, have cast some light on the variety of assumptions which have been made concerning the interests and experiences of those people who visit the countryside for recreation. It is now possible to look at the phenomenon of countryside recreation with knowledge of the variety of experiences and variety of attitudes which make up this phenomenon, but also in the knowledge of the remarkable

similarities in perception of the countryside which cut across these differences. Throughout both the discussion in the first part of the thesis and the empirical results there has been the underlying message of the importance of the countryside as a leisure environment for many people. It is to be hoped that, with the benefit of this and future research on the nature of people's activities and interests, policy and provision for recreational use of the countryside will come to be tailored more closely to the interests and preferences of the individuals most concerned -- present and future visitors to the countryside.

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## Appendix

### Dissimilarity coefficients used for MDS and Cluster analysis

(a) MDS

Manhattan metric: sum of $\{p_{ij} - q_{ij}\}$ where p and q respectively represent the values from i to j for any two variables or individuals.

Euclidean distance: sum of $\{p_{ij} - q_{ij}\}^2$ where p and q respectively represent the values from i to j for any two variables or individuals.

(b) Cluster analysis

Squared euclidean distance for binary data: $\frac{b + c}{n}$

where b represents the number of attributes present in case i and absent in case j
c represents the number of attributes present in case j and absent in case i
n represents the total number of cases

Error sum of squares distance: $\frac{b + c}{2n}$

Shape difference: $\frac{n(b + c) - (b - c)^2}{n^2}$

**Depth interview questionnaire schedule**

Hello, I'm carrying out interviews as part of a survey of people's leisure activities which is being done at Edinburgh University. Would you like to help us by answering a few questions about your leisure activities and interests: the questionnaire will take about fifteen minutes to complete and any information you give will be treated in strict confidence.

1. Can I start by asking you what you do in your spare time at home?

2. Can you tell me what you do in your spare time out of the house?

3. The rest of the questionnaire is about a specific kind of leisure activity, namely going on trips or outings to the countryside.

IF NOT MENTIONED
4. Do you ever go on drives, outings or other trips to the country?

IF NO
5. Is it something you would like to do? Why?

IF YES continue with question 6. IF NO end interview. Thank you.

IF ALREADY MENTIONED 6. When was the last time you visited the country? Where did you go? What exactly is there?

7. Who did you go with?

8. What did you enjoy most about visiting ----------?

9. What did you do?

10. Is that the sort of thing you would usually do? (Describe other trips)

11. What sort of places/activities do you enjoy the most? Why?

12. What kind of places do you not like visiting in the country, if any?

13. What, in general, do you enjoy most about visiting the country?

14. Is there anything you dislike about visiting the country?

15. Is there anything you would like to do on trips to the country that you don't do now?

16. Is the countryside important to you? Could you say why?

17. Do you think the countryside has changed very much in, say, the last twenty years? How?

That's all. Thank you very much for your help.

Questionnaire No. Date / Time start: end: Area A/B

Introduction

Hello, I'm carrying out interviews as part of a survey of people's leisure activities which is being done at Edinburgh University. Would you like to help us by answering a few questions about your leisure activities and interests: the questionnaire will take about half an hour to complete, and the information we're collecting will be used in the future planning and provision of leisure facilities. Any information you give will of course be treated in confidence.

I'd like to start by asking you what you do in your spare time at home (show card A)

1. Could you tell me how often you do the following things

Code
1 very often
2 occasionally
3 rarely
4 never

1.1 Watching TV
1.2 Listening to tapes/records/radio
1.3 Hobbies/crafts/games
1.4 Looking after pets
1.5 DIY/car maintenance
1.6 Reading books/papers/magazines
1.7 Playing with children
1.8 Entertaining friends/relatives
1.9 Gardening

2. Which three of these do you enjoy the most? 2.1 2.2 2.3

3. What sort of things do you do in your spare time outside the home? (Probe)

3.1 3.5
3.2 3.6
3.3 3.7
3.4 3.8

4. Could you rank these in order, from those you enjoy most to those you enjoy least?

4.1 4.5
4.2 4.6
4.3 4.7
4.4 4.8

5. (Show card B) Thinking about the last twelve months, can you tell me how often you do the following activities, on average?

Code
1 more than once a week
2 weekly
3 fortnightly
4 once a month
5 several times a year
6 two or three times a year
7 once a year
8 never

5.1 Eating out
5.2 Going for a drink
5.3 Visiting friends and relatives
5.4 Visiting town parks and gardens
5.5 Visiting museums, exhibitions etc.
5.6 Cinema, concerts, shows, theatre
5.7 Watch live sports
5.8 Take part in active sports
5.9 Dances and discotheques
5.10 Hobbies, crafts and games
5.11 Go to the bingo
5.12 Go to the races (horses, dogs)
5.13 Go for a drive
5.14 Go to the sea-side
5.15 Go on trips to the country (picnics, outings)
5.16 Attend clubs, organisations or societies

6. Are you a member of any clubs, organisations or societies?

(If country visits made as in question 5, ask question 7. If visits not made go to question 12)

7. Now, you've said in answer to question 5 that you've gone on trips to the country in the last year. I'd like to ask you about that in some more detail. Where did you go the last time you went on a trip to the country? (Probe what kind of place: location, scenery, provision, details of party)

8. What did you do? (Probe all activities)

9. Is that what you usually do on a trip to the country? Yes/No
(If Yes go to question 11, if No go to question 10)

10. (If No) What else do you usually do? (Probe all activities)

11. Which of all these things you do on trips to the country do you enjoy most?

(Go to question 17)

12. (If visits to country not made as in question 5) I would now like to talk about a specific kind of leisure activity, namely making visits to the country. You've just mentioned in answer to question 5 that going on trips to the country is something you haven't done in the past year. Could you tell me why that is?

13. Although you don't go on trips to the country now, has there ever been a time when you did go frequently? Yes/No
(If Yes go to question 14, if No go to question 15)

14. Why did you stop going?

15. Is going on trips to the country something you'd like to do? Yes/No
(If Yes go to question 16, if No go to question 17)

16. Why? (probe)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 17. | Have you ever lived in the country, either as an adult or a child? | Adult.....Yes/No<br>Child.....Yes/No |
| 18. | When you were a child did you ever go on holidays to the country? | Yes/No |
| 19. | As a child did you go on day trips to the country with your parents? | Quite often....1<br>Occasionally...2<br>Very rarely. ..3<br>Never.....4 |

Countryside activities

I'd like to ask you about some of the things you might do on a trip to the country now. Can you take a look at this list (show card C). It's a list of some of the things you can do on a day out in the country.

20. Can you tell me which of these you do regularly, or at least quite often?

Places to visit. Which of these places do you visit often on trips in the country?

| | |
|---|---|
| 20.01 | Country villages |
| 20.02 | Nature reserves |
| 20.03 | Country pubs |
| 20.04 | Stately homes |
| 20.05 | Parklands and gardens (in the country) |
| 20.06 | Places of historical interest (castles, monuments, historic buildings) |
| 20.07 | Sporting events in the country |
| 20.08 | Country parks |
| 20.09 | Nature trails |
| 20.10 | Fairs, markets and similar country events |
| 20.11 | Wildlife and safari parks |
| 20.12 | A farm |
| 20.13 | The beach (not at a sea-side resort) |
| 20.14 | Open country (hills, moorlands etc) |

Things to do. Which of these do you usually do on a trip to the country?

| | |
|---|---|
| 20.15 | Visit friends or relatives in the country |
| 20.16 | Go for a picnic |
| 20.17 | Go cycling |
| 20.18 | Watch live sports in the countryside |
| 20.19 | Take part in active sports (for example canoeing, skiing, sailing) |
| 20.20 | Go for a short walk (less than two miles) |
| 20.21 | Go for a long walk (over two miles) |
| 20.22 | Just relax and do nothing |
| 20.23 | Play informal games (for example ball games, model boats and planes, kite flying etc) |
| 20.24 | Go fishing |
| 20.25 | Go camping |
| 20.26 | Nature study/birdwatching |
| 20.27 | Go boating/go on a boat trip |
| 20.28 | Visit teashops, restaurants etc in the country |
| 20.29 | Go horse riding or pony trekking |

21. Are there any other things you do on trips to the country that we haven't covered?

22. Of the places mentioned in the first part of the list (card C) which five do you enjoy visiting most

22.01
22.02
22.03
22.04
22.05

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23. Of the activities mentioned in the second part of the list (card C) which five do you enjoy doing most

23.01
23.02
23.03
23.04
23.05

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Can you have a look at this list (show card D). It's a list of some of the things people like about visiting the country.

24. Can you think for a moment about the country and then tell me which six you like the most

24.01 Relaxation
24.02 Peace and quiet
24.03 It's nicer in the country than in the city
24.04 It's something I can do with friends
24.05 Fresh air
24.06 The sense of freedom
24.07 To unwind and find the time to think about things
24.08 To be with the family
24.09 The open spaces
24.10 It's a chance to develop skills and interests
24.11 To recover from the pressures of work
24.12 A chance to see wildlife
24.13 It's somewhere the children can play freely
24.14 I enjoy driving in the country
24.15 Learning about nature and the countryside
24.16 The scenery
24.17 It's a chance to meet other people and make friends
24.18 Exercise
24.19 To get out of the city

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25. Could you put your choices in order of importance?

25.01
25.02
25.03
25.04
25.05
25.06

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26. Could you have a look at these pictures now. When you've had a good look at them could you sort them into a few groups so those pictures that are together are in some way alike. You can make as many groups as you like and you can use the same pictures in more than one group if you wish. Each time you have a group can you tell me what it is that all the pictures in that group have in common.

26.01 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25

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26.02 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25

---

26.03 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25

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26.04 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25

---

26.05 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25

---

26.06 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25

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26.07 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25

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26.08 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25

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26.09 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25

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26.10 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25

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26.11 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25
Like

---

26.12 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25
Dislike

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Can you take a look at this list (show card E). It's a list of statements about the country. Can you tell me whether you agree or disagree with each statement, using the scale provided.

| Disagree strongly 1 | Disagree a little 2 | Neutral/ Don't know 3 | Agree a little 4 | Agree strongly 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 27.01 The most important thing about going to the country is getting close to nature | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.02 I prefer to visit places in the country where there's something provided to attract people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.03 I prefer to find quiet uncrowded places to visit in the country | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 27.04 | Being in the country soon gets boring | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.05 | When I go for a trip to the country with my family or friends we prefer to get away from other people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.06 | Noisy events and places that attract a lot of people are out of place in the country | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.07 | There should be a wide variety of things to see and do provided in the country | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.08 | I think it's important to go for a walk when you visit the country | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.09 | The countryside doesn't interest me at all | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.10 | I think there's a right way and a wrong way to behave in the country | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.11 | There should be more scope for recreation in the country | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.12 | If I go out into the country I prefer to get away from all signs of civilisation, right out into the wild | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.13 | I don't think it matters what people do in the country as long as they enjoy their visit | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.14 | There's no need for the planners to provide leisure facilities in the countryside | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.15 | There are too many people visiting the countryside these days | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.16 | The country is more interesting than the city | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.17 | I like meeting other people when I go out to places in the country | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.18 | The countryside is all just farms and fields really, it's difficult finding somewhere to go | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.19 | I like to visit places in the countryside where there's something interesting to see | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.20 | The countryside is for quiet and peaceful recreation only | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.21 | I like to spend the day driving around when I visit the country | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

For most people, work and family can influence the way we spend our leisure time. I'd like to ask you a few questions about these now, just to finish off.

28. Can you give me some details about the people in your household, starting with yourself?

| Code | Relationship to respondent | Age | Sex | Married status |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| S Spouse<br>C Child<br>P Parent<br>R Relative (Other)<br>F Friend<br>O Other | 1 | | | |
| | 2 | | | |
| | 3 | | | |
| | 4 | | | |
| | 5 | | | |
| | 6 | | | |
| | 7 | | | |
| | 8 | | | |
| | 9 | | | |
| | 10 | | | |

29. Are you:

1 Working full time
2 Working part time
3 Short time working
4 Retired
5 Unemployed
6 Housewife (not otherwise employed)
7 In full time education

30. In what kind of industry, trade or organisation do (did) you work?

31. What job do (did) you actually do?

32. Are (were) you self-employed? Yes/No

33. Do (did) you have a supervisory role? Yes/No

34. Could you tell me at what age you finished your full time education?

1 Minimum leaving age
2 Above minimum but only school education
3 Further education
4 Still continuing

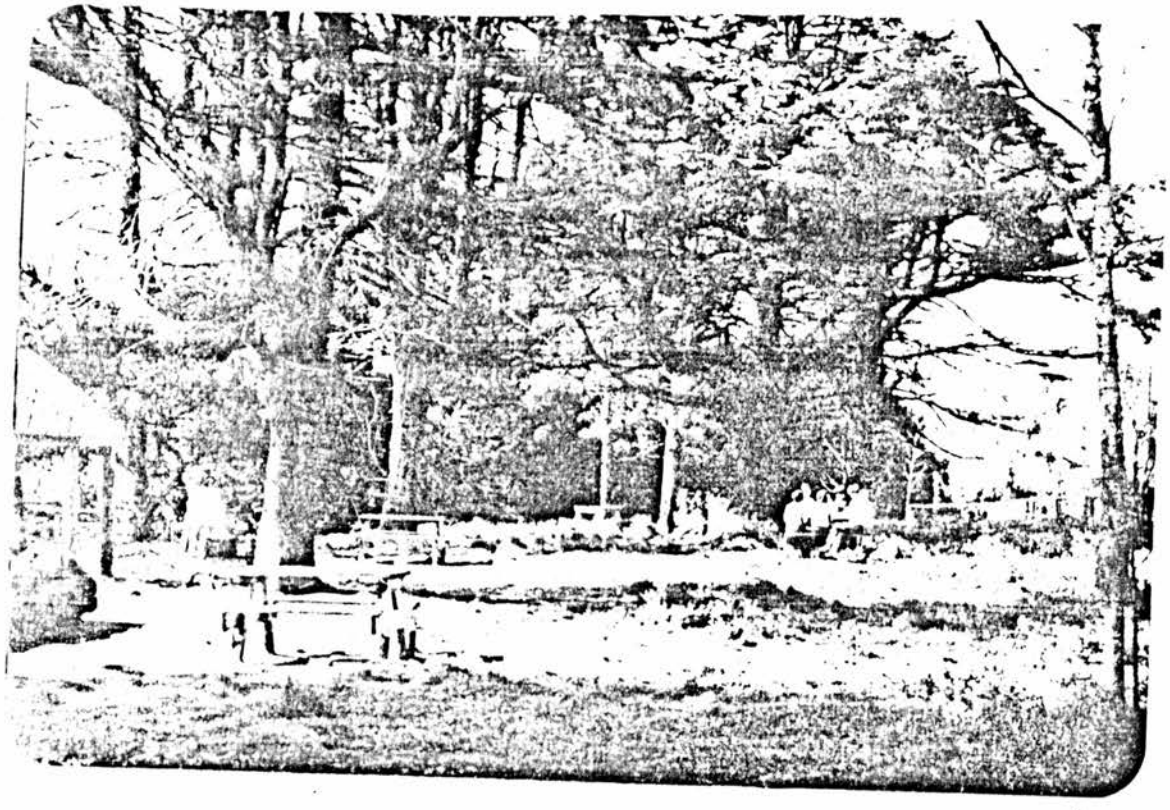
35. Do you own a car, motorcycle, or other means of motor transport?

1 Car
2 Motorcycle
3 Other
4 None (If Yes to 1,2 or 3 then End)

36. Do you have regular access to a car or other motor vehicle? Yes/No

THAT'S ALL. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION.

Photographs used in the multiple sorting task



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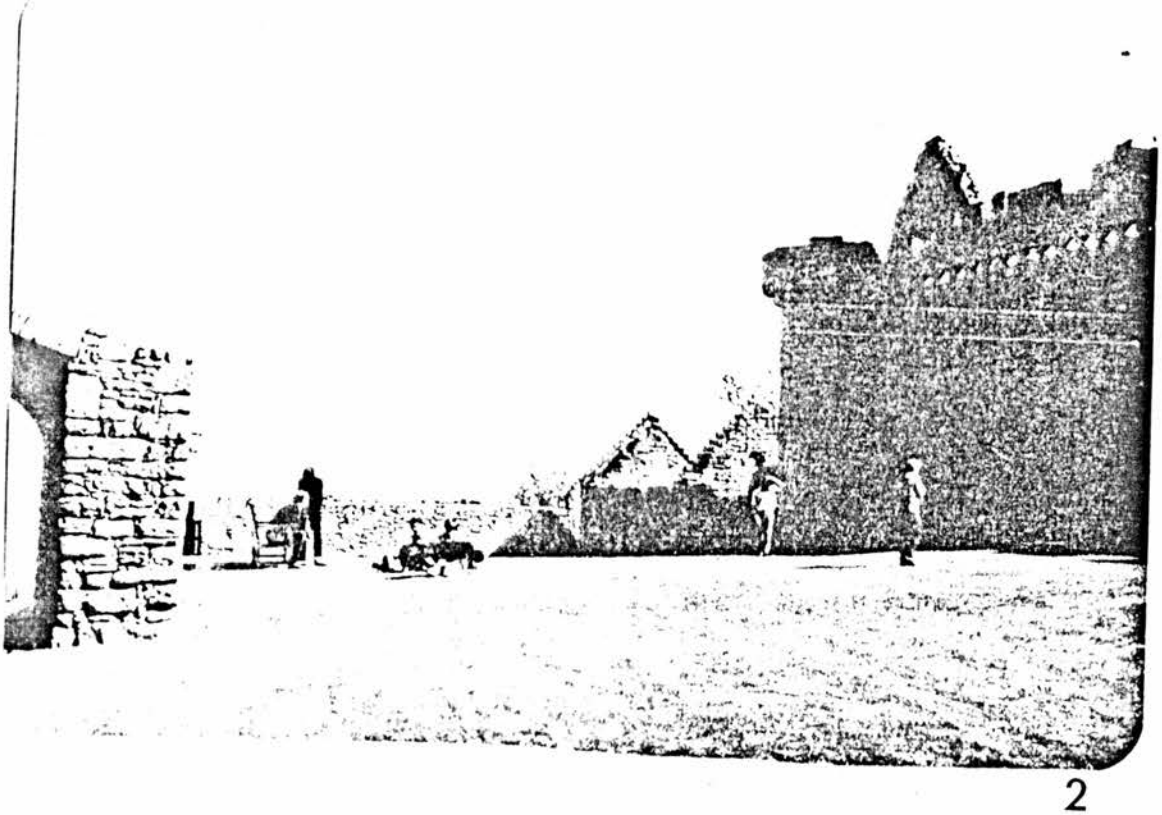

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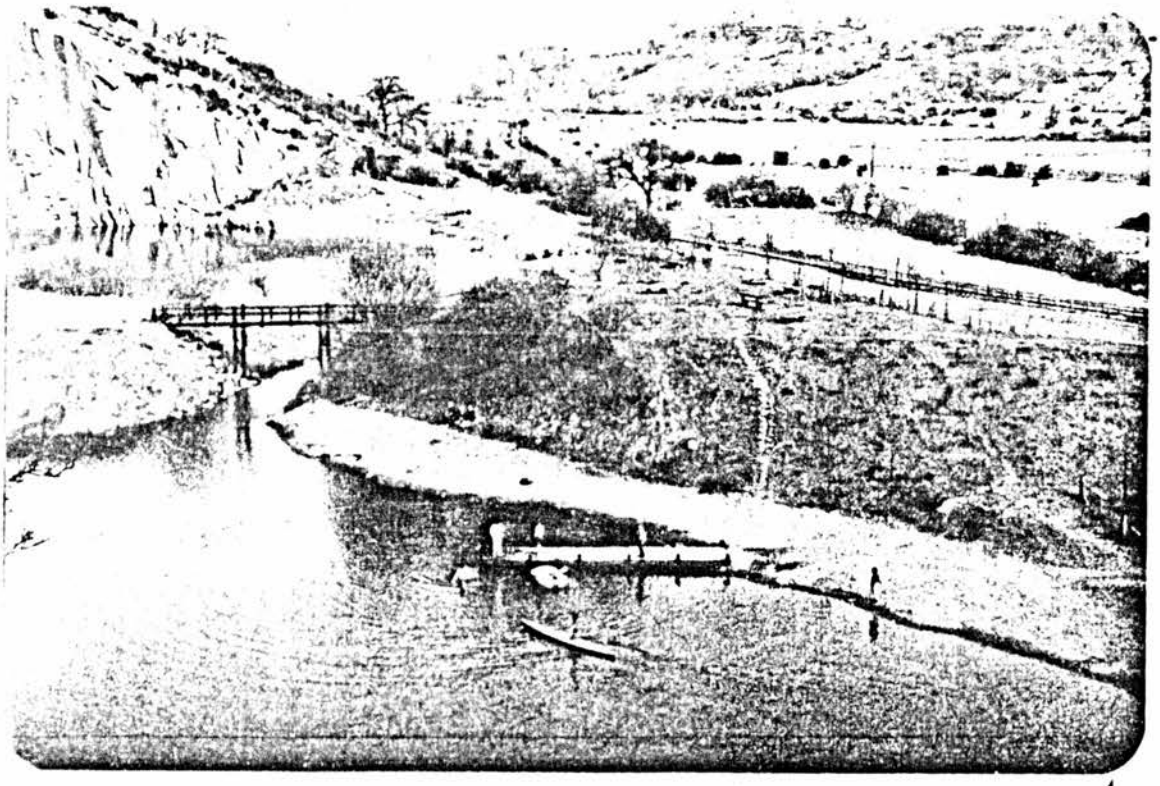

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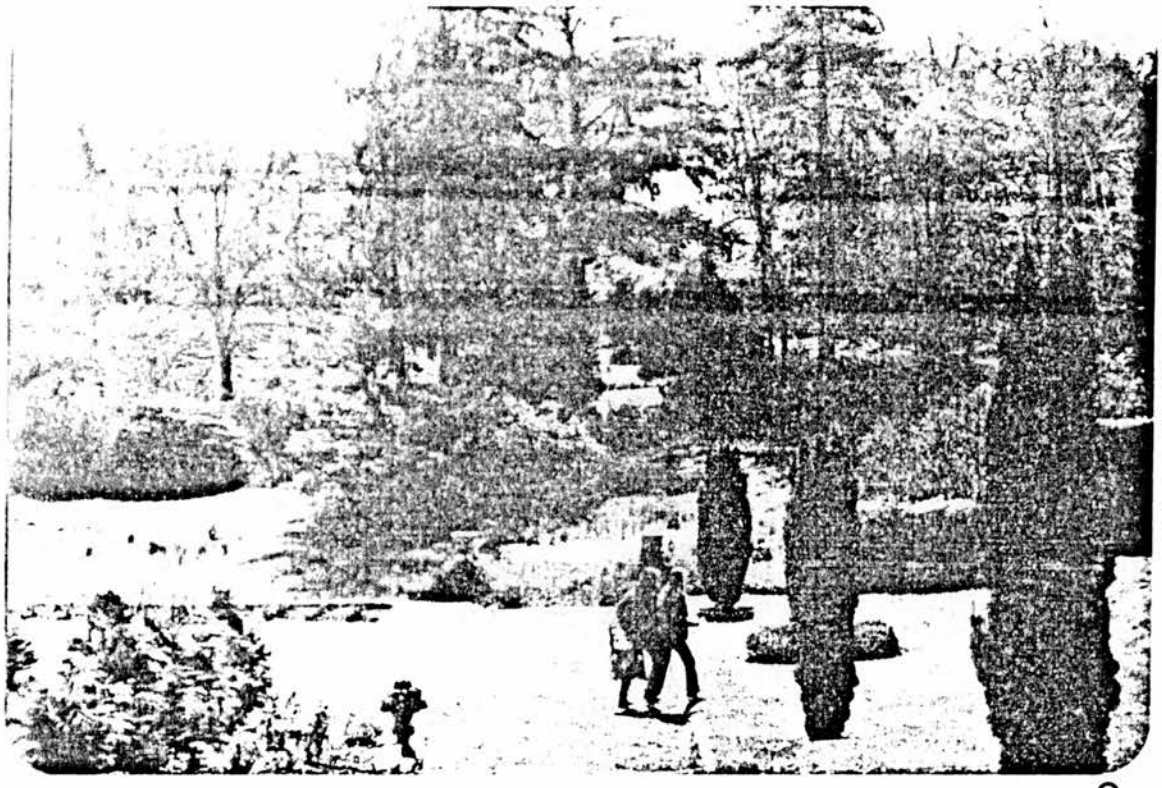

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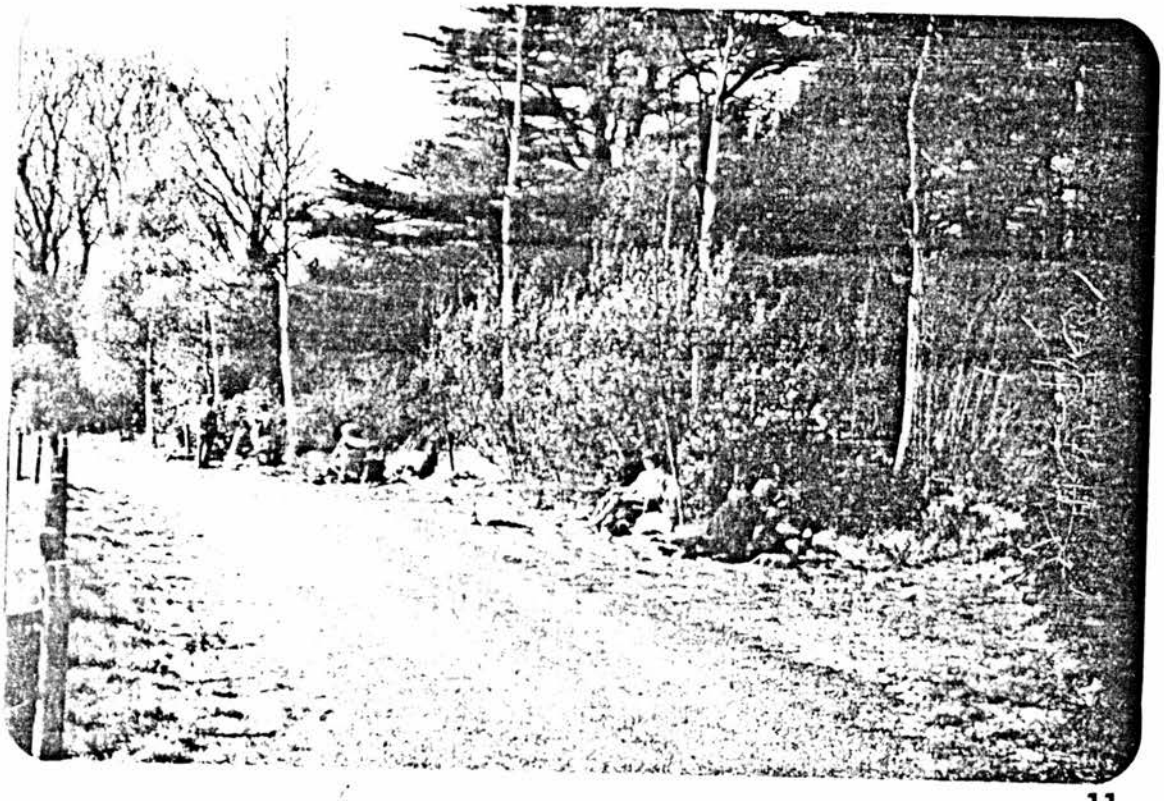

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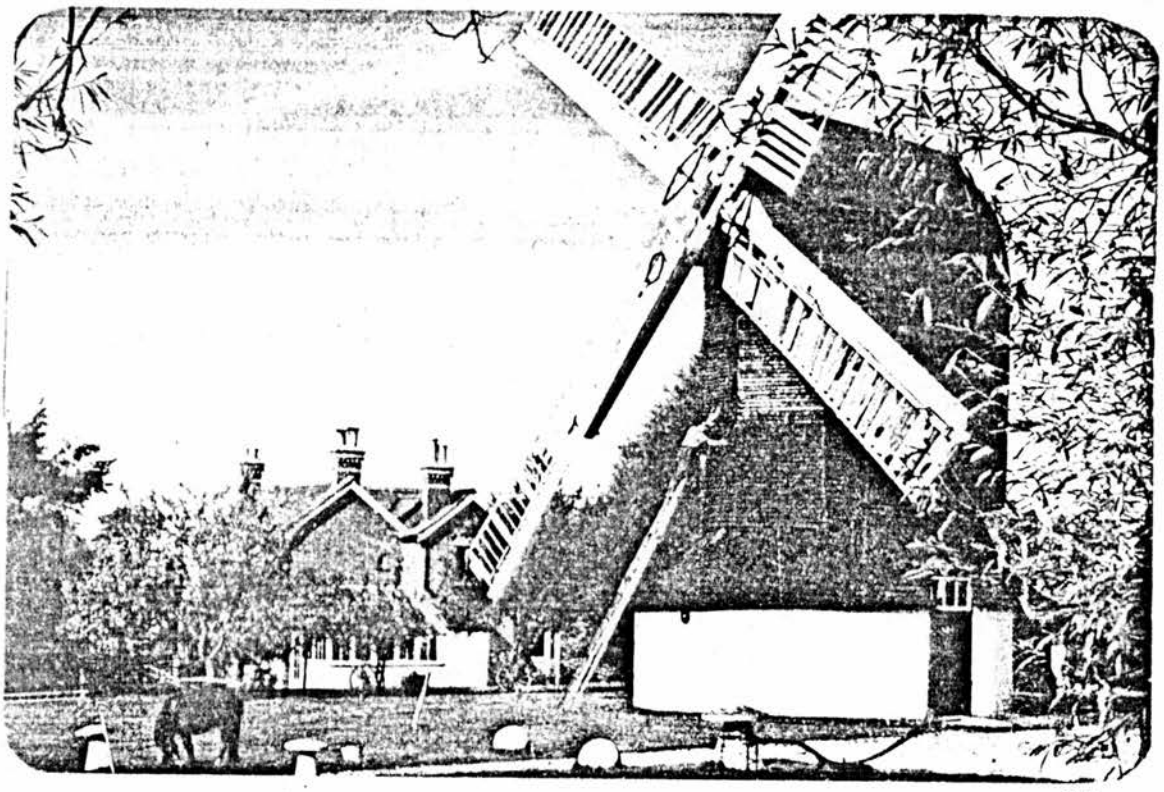

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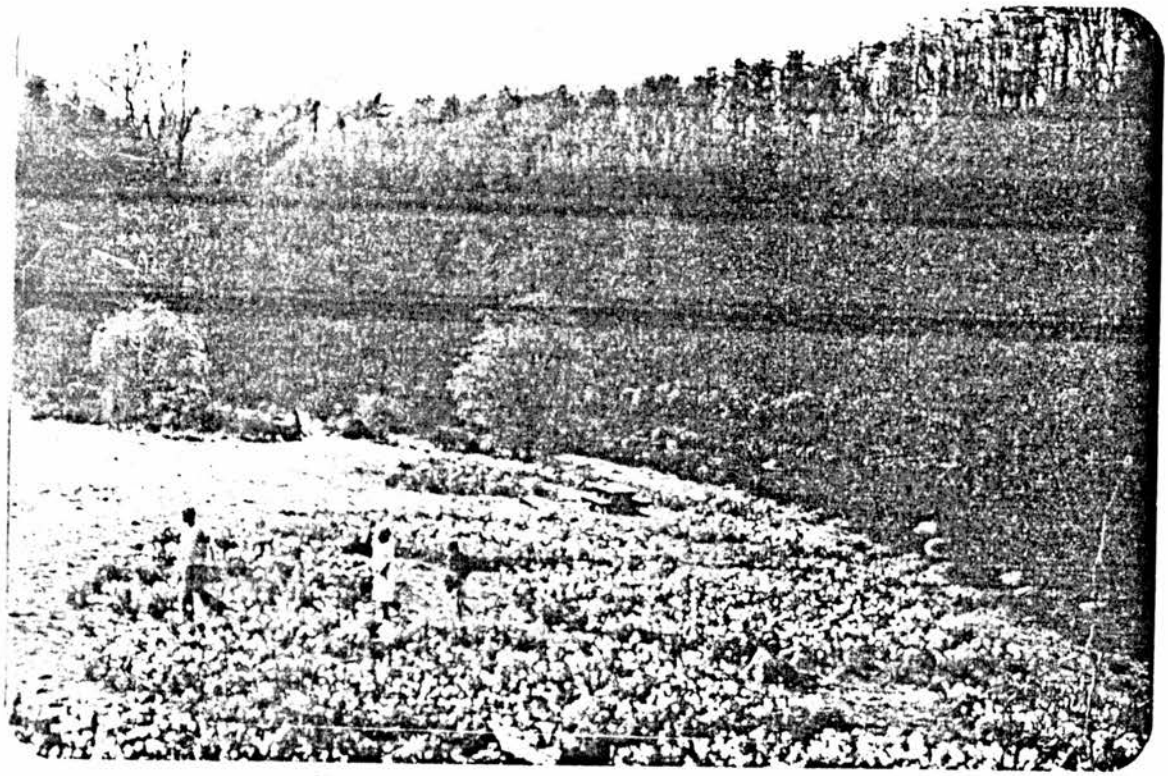

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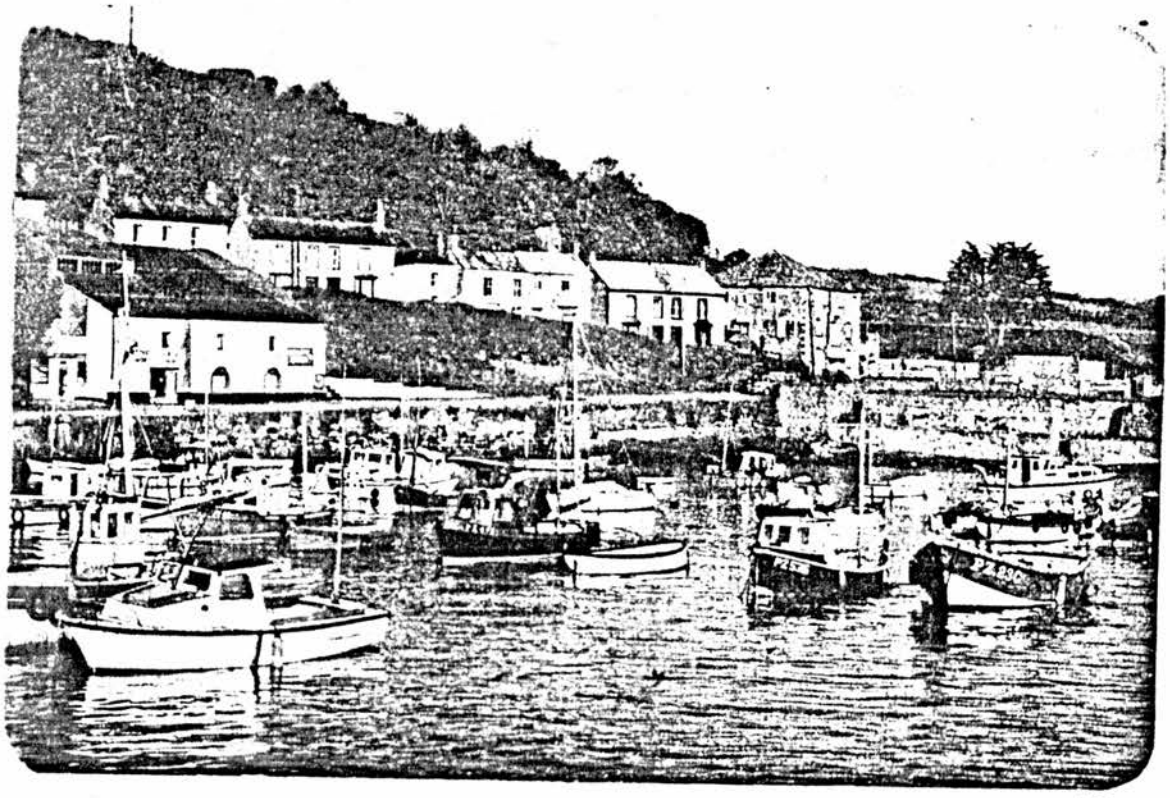

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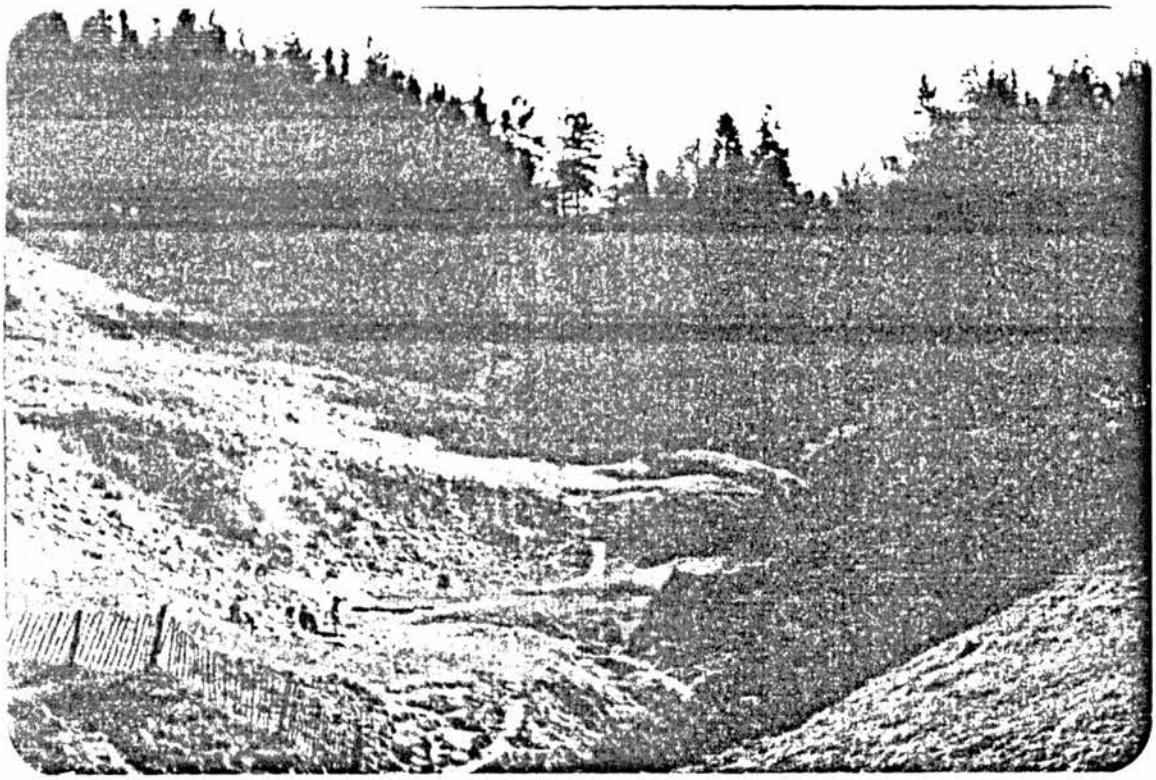

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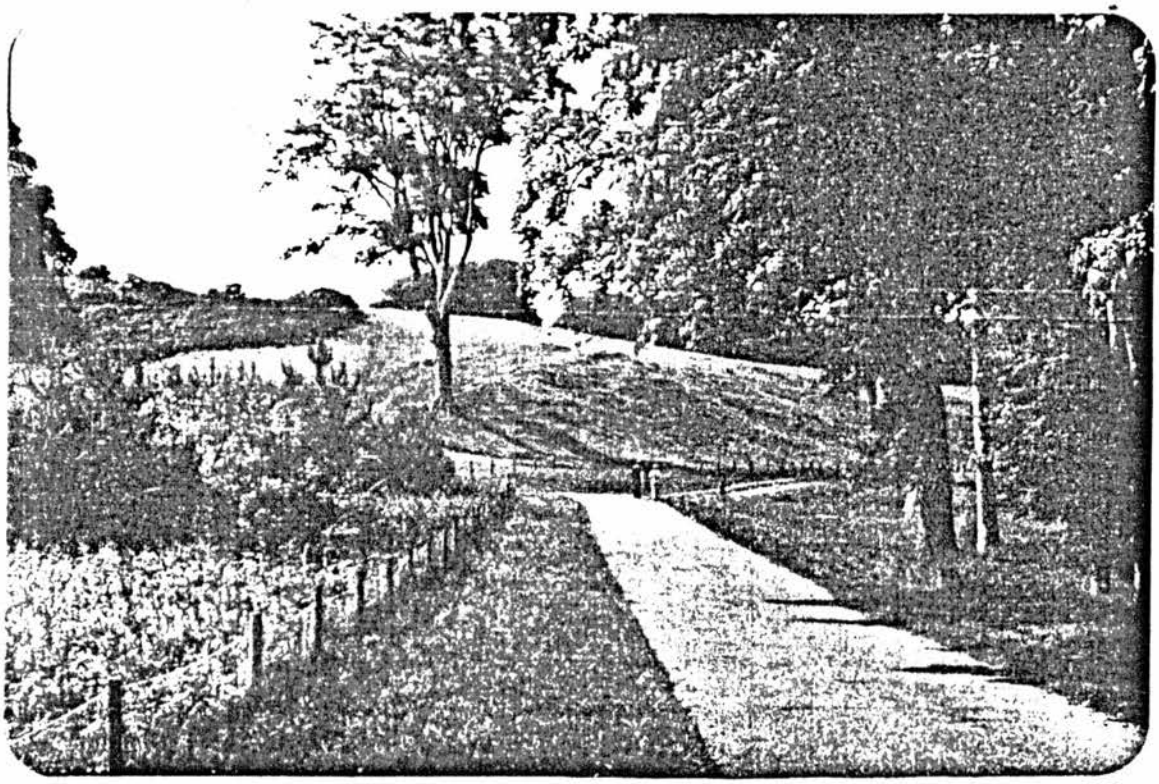

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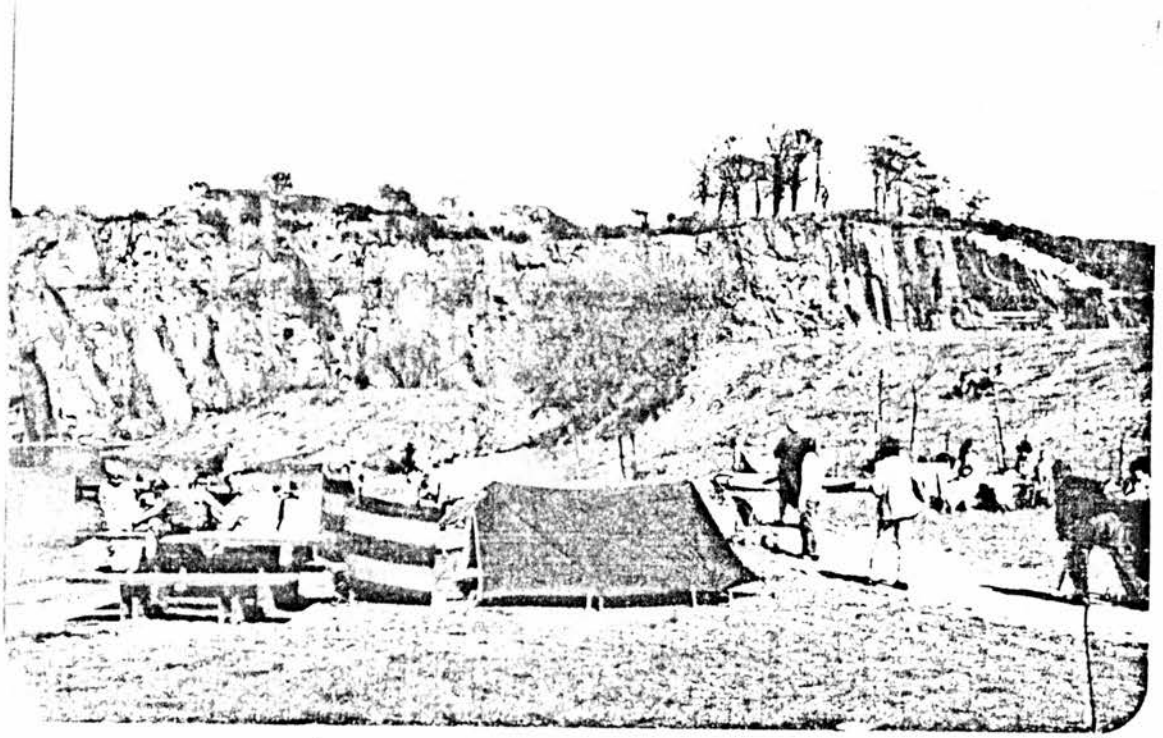

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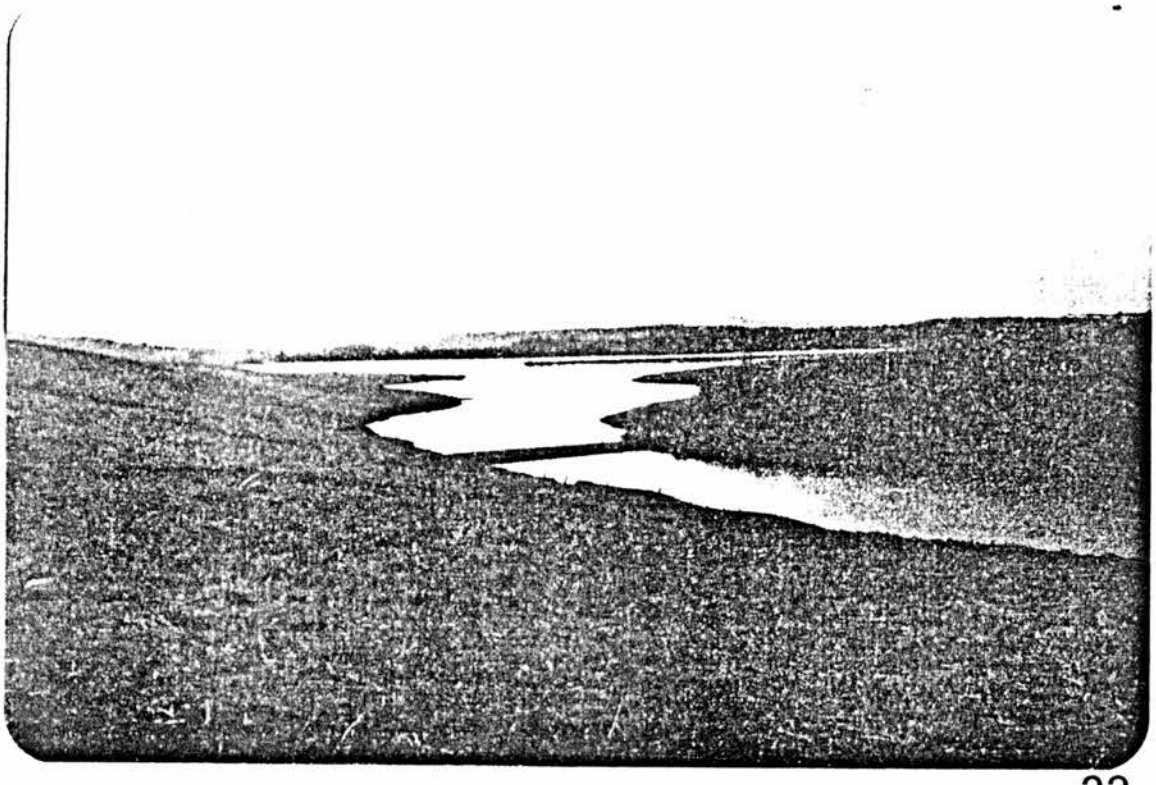

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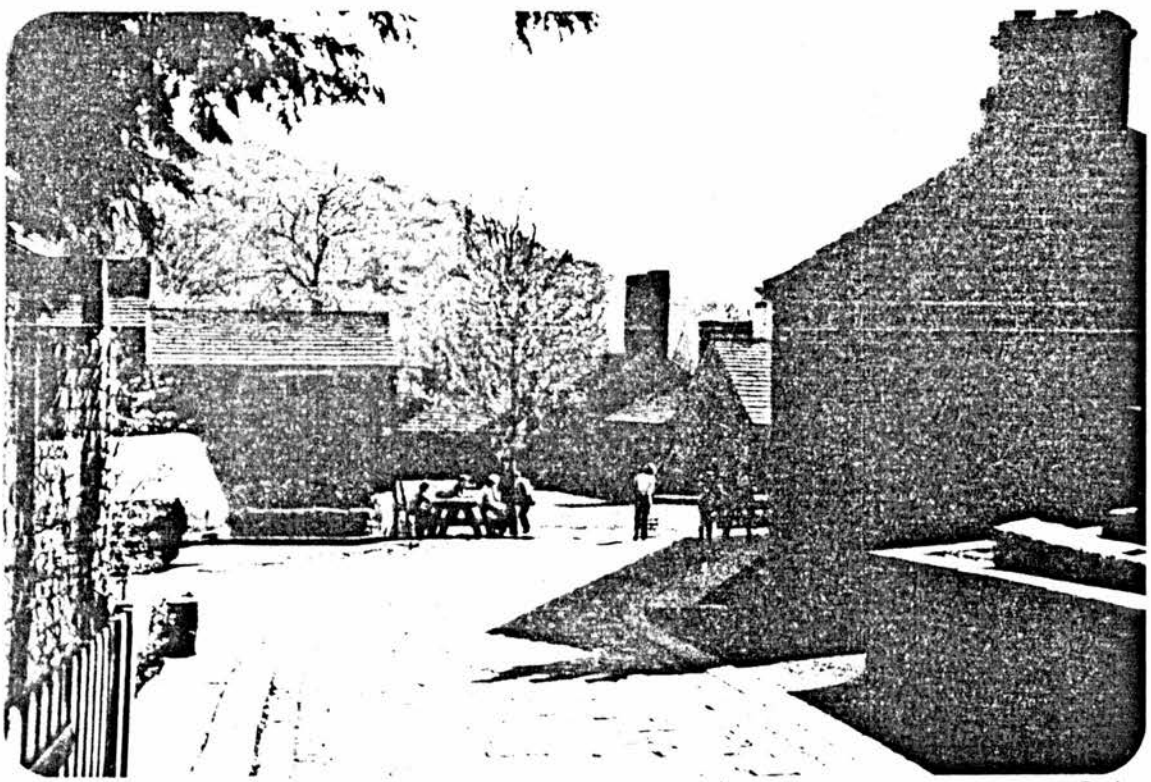

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